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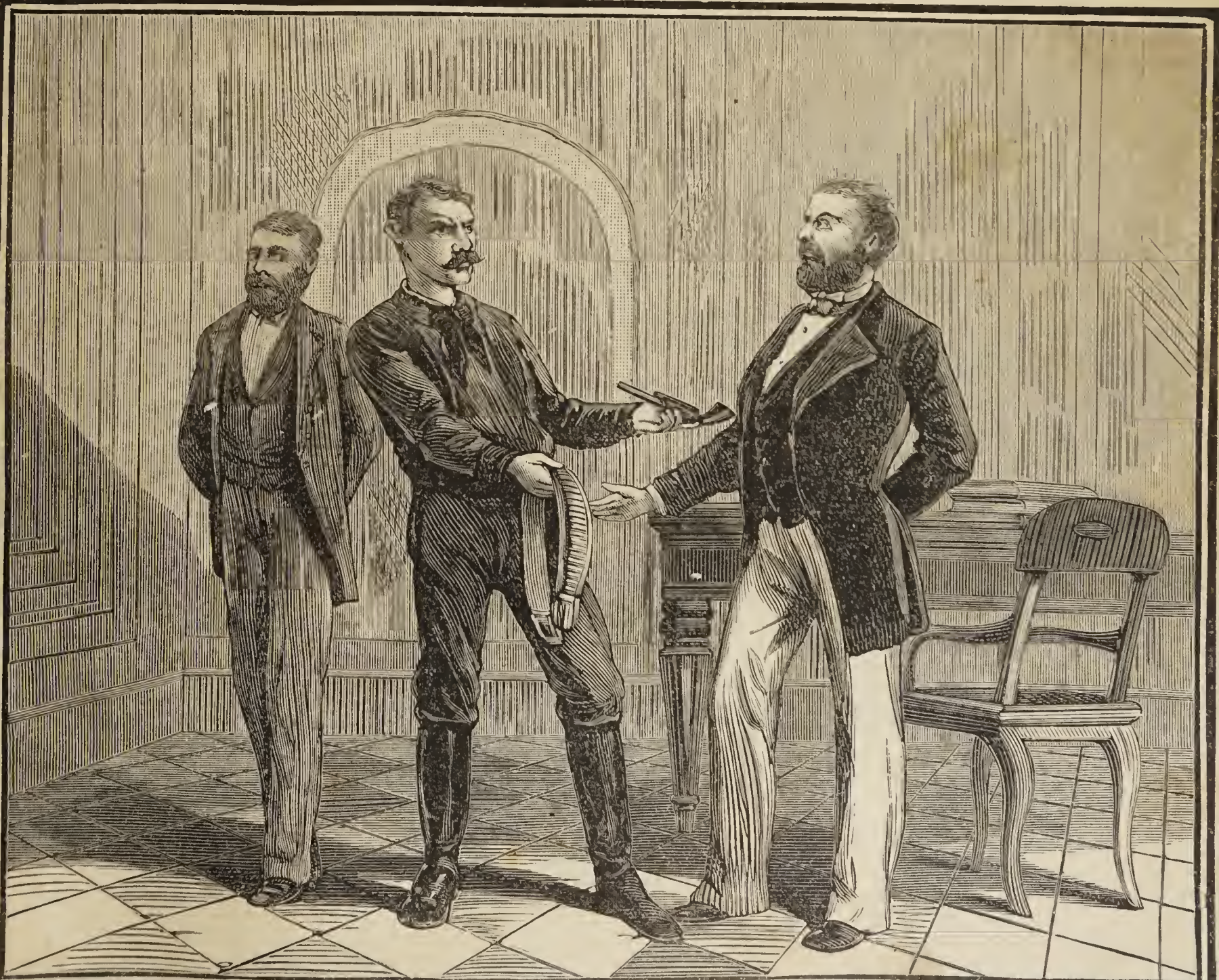
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## FRANK JAMES, THE AVENGER, AND HIS SURRENDER.

BY D. W. STEVENS.









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## FRANK JAMES, THE AVENGER, AND HIS SURRENDER.

By D. W. STEVENS,

Author of "The James Boys in New Orleans; or, Wild Adventures in the South," "The James Boys' Trip Around the World; or, Carl Greene the Detective's Longest Chase," etc., etc., etc.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE ASSASSINATION.

THE spring of 1882 was cold, damp and dreary until April, when the weather of a sudden grew warm and pleasant.

St. Joseph, Missouri, enjoyed a mystery. This mystery was a family that had suddenly emigrated to the city. Who they were, where they came from, and what business they were engaged in, no one knew. The family consisted of one woman, two men, and two children, all going under the name of Howard. Had the good people of St. Joseph dreamed that the newcomers were a portion of the notorious James' gang, it is doubtful whether they could have rested securely in their beds.

Mrs. Howard, as she called herself, was a sprightly little woman, of light complexion, blue eyes, and regarded handsome. She did the principal business for the family. Morning and night she was seen upon the streets with her little market-basket or shopping.

Mr. Howard, as he was known, was a tall, finely formed gentleman, about forty years of age, and of rather intellectual appearance.

This family had resided in St. Joseph since some time in September, 1881. They had lived peaceably, quietly, making no visits nor receiving no calls.

It was the third day of April, 1882; the weather, which had heretofore been raw, became warm and pleasant.

The little cottage home occupied by the mystic family had ceased to cause comment. It was situated in the suburbs of St. Joseph.

About ten o'clock on this day, as a gentleman was passing the house, he heard the sharp report of a pistol, followed by screams and groans.

His curiosity was naturally aroused, and he hurried to the cottage. As he was nearing it, he saw two men leap the front fence and run up the street. Without stopping to inquire of them the cause of their flight, he entered the cottage.

Here a scene of horror met his view.

A man was lying on the floor, a woman kneeling by his side, supporting his head; the blood was streaming from a wound in the forehead, and his ghastly face and fallen jaw indicated that life was extinct.

By the side of the woman were two weeping children, a boy and a girl.

"Who has done this?" a citizen of St. Joseph asked.

"They have killed him! they have killed him!" the woman sobbed, as she tried in vain to wipe the blood that flowed over the dead man's face.

"Oh, Jesse, Jesse, speak, for Heaven's sake speak to me!" the woman continued to sob.

"Who killed him?" the citizen asked.

"Bob—Bob Ford," was the reply.

"Where is he?" the man asked.

"Gone—run like a coward who dares not face his victim," the woman replied.

"Who is this man that lies weltering in his blood?" the man asked.

"He was my husband."

"What was his name?"

"Howard."

"Where was he from?"

"Baltimore."

"How long have you resided in St. Joseph?"

"Over four months."

"Was Bob Ford related to him?"

"No, no, thank Heaven. There are no traitors in our family."

"Was there any quarrel between them?"

"None, none. He has killed his best friend," sobbed the woman hysterically.

In the meantime the gentleman had entered the cottage, and had done all he could to soothe and quiet the almost distracted woman.

The astonished and shocked citizen of St. Joseph took the inanimate form of the murdered man from his weeping widow and laid it on the floor.

"Be calm, my good woman," he said; "some great crime has been committed."

The woman seemed lost to reason, in mingled emotions of grief and rage. To attempt to control her was almost impossible.

Yet, after a few minutes, he induced her to go in the adjoining room from where the corpse lay, and told her to keep the little children from a sight that was calculated to shock them.

She was more calm, and yet the tears flowed like rain.

"Now, my good woman, this fearful crime could not have been committed without some reason. What motive had this man, whom you call Bob, for killing your husband?"

"Oh, heavens! I don't know! My husband was his best friend, and never would have done him harm," she sobbed.

"Who was the other man here with him? There were two."

"It was Charley, Bob's brother."

"Tell me, as nearly as you can, how this happened?"

"We lived here since last autumn, and Charley came with us. I never saw Bob Ford until last Sunday. He met my husband on the street, and, being invited, came to the house. My husband was very kind to him. We liked his brother Charley. Charley had been help-



ing me all morning about dusting the furniture and cleaning the house. The children were playing, and we were as happy as could be. The men folks all went out to the stable to carry the horses. We intended moving on a farm this spring, but had reuted none yet. I was still at work in the kitchen when they came in. Then I heard a pistol fired, and running in the front room, saw my darling husband lying dead on the floor and the two Ford Boys running away like cowards, with their revolvers in their hands. When I called them to come back, Charley did so, and he swore it was Bob who killed him."

"Is that all you know?"

"All. Oh, Heaven! it is all, every word," wailed the woman.

At that moment the St. Joseph gentleman heard the sound of many footsteps in the outer room.

He hurried out to find the two men he had seen running away from the house enter it again in custody of three or four police officers.

The man was not a little astonished to see one of the captured men point to the dead body, and hear him say in a voice of the utmost coolness:

"There he is—there is the man I killed."

"Sir, do you admit having killed this man?" asked the gentleman who had been endeavoring to soothe Mrs. Howard.

"Of course I do. I did it, and told these officers so."

The man was completely thunderstruck.

Why should he admit to cool and deliberate murder.

"Do you know who this man is?" asked one of the officers, pointing to the bleeding corpse.

"A Mr. Howard, from Baltimore."

"No, sir, not much, if what these boys tell us is true."

"Then, in Heaven's name, who is he?"

"No less a personage than the notorious train-robber, Jesse James, the bandit king of America."

"What! Great Heaven, can this be true?"

"They are willing to risk their lives on it, so they declare."

"Can it be possible that the greatest outlaw of the age has been here among us?"

"It is possible and true, beyond a doubt," said the officer.

"How has it been that he was not arrested?"

"Because he lived here under an assumed name in perfect security. No one knew him."

"Who are these men who killed him?"

"They claim to be detectives acting under authority from Gov. Crittenden, and say they shot him for the reward offered for him."

The man who had been attempting to console the widow now went into the room where she sat weeping, and holding her distracted children to her heart.

"They say your husband's name is Jesse James," said the comforter.

For a moment she hesitated, as though she would deny it, and then, in a voice choked with grief, said:

"It is true; alas, it is true. There is no use to deny it any longer. He was Jesse James; they have killed him at last."

Officers of the law took possession of the house and the body.

Mrs. Jesse James telegraphed to her mother-in-law, Mrs. Samuels, the sad event, and wrote a note to Frank James on a scrap of paper. No one saw the latter, and she, waiting for an opportunity, met a man on the street to whom a mystic sign was given and answered.

Unobserved she handed him the note, and a few moments later the strange man, with a broad-brimmed slouch hat and riding cloak on, was mounted on the beautiful dark horse of Jesse

James' known as Siroc, and riding from the city in a southern direction.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE OATH OF VENGEANCE.

A FEW miles from Kansas City in what is known as the Cracker Neck neighborhood, there stands in a dense forest a lonely cabin. It is at this day deserted; but on the third of April was inhabited by a tall, grave-looking man, with neat, well-trimmed whiskers, and the look and air of a farmer.

He had a wife and three children in the cabin with him.

The occupation of the man seemed to be that of a wood-cutter, though he doubtless never felled a tree.

He may have plowed the little field of two or three acres in front of the house, but if he did, the large black horse in the log stable was not used for that purpose.

The animal was blooded, and looked more like a racer than a farm horse. The saddle and trappings were of the best material.

The tall, grave-looking man stood in a little front yard of the rather neat cabin, tapping the toe of his left boot with the slender cane he carried.

His manner was serious, his face rather cadaverous and thin, and he looked not unlike a country parson. As he walked about we noticed that he is a little lame.

His wife, a rather handsome woman of near thirty, stands in the door and looks on him somewhat affectionately as he wanders around in the front yard.

"What is the matter, Frank?" she asked, as she saw a settled look of uneasiness on his face.

"Nothing, Annie, that I know of."

"But you seem restless?"

"I am."

"What is it that annoys you?"

"I cannot tell."

"Do you mean you dare not tell me?"

"No, Annie, I dare tell you anything, but I cannot tell because I don't know."

The wife, for she was his wife, came out in the yard, and tenderly laid her arm around his neck.

"Frank, my dear husband, you are annoyed by something you have heard."

"In truth, my darling, I am not. I have heard nothing to annoy me."

"Then why should you look so sad?"

"I have no reason for it, my dear," he replied. "I just simply feel an impression that all is not going to be well with me, or some of my friends. I have nothing to base this impression upon, unless it be that my brother Jesse has become so reckless that I live in almost hourly expectation of his death or capture."

"I trust you may be mistaken, Frank. Jesse was alive and well the last you heard from him."

"Yes, alive and well, that is true. He may be alive to-day and a corpse to-morrow. He may be hearty and happy when the morning sun arises in the east, and the setting leave him a corpse. We can count nothing on the future by the past. The train-robber lives in constant danger of death and ruin. Our once noble band will soon be a thing of the past. Basham, Little and others are prisoners; Hill, Settlers, Glinard, Wood Ilte and others killed."

"My darling husband, why not abandon a business so hazardous? Why not take your family to some secluded spot somewhere on earth and live a life of peace and comfort? Live in security from the prowling men of the law."

"We will, my dear. One more haul and it will be our last act on earth. I have persuaded Jesse, my reckless brother, to consent to go to Europe after we have succeeded in robbing the

Plattsburg bank. He will not go before, as we have been compelled to expend all the money we have made yet in baffling the officers."

"Oh, Frank, I so fear a failure."

"It will not be our first."

"But something fatal may result from it?"

"That, my dear, we are compelled to take our chances upon."

"But why, oh, why take this risk?"

"The additional risk, my dear, is but small. A great murder trial is going on in the town, and we will find all the citizens congregated around the court-room. The work will be done with neatness and dispatch, and we escape with our usual success."

The sun had now sunk behind the western hills and forests.

The man, who, as the reader doubtless suspects, was none other than Frank James, next to the greatest of all living bandits, allowed his wife to persuade him to enter the house.

"Drive away your foolish fancies, my love," she said. "There is no real danger yet, and we will hope that none will come."

Frank James was usually silent and grave.

In the wildest excitement of battle, when pursued by men of fury with threats of vengeance, and while angry balls whizzed past his ears, he was cool grave, and determined.

While Jesse was light-hearted and merry, Frank was cool, determined and silent.

Jesse played pranks upon the very men who desired to catch him, but Frank did not. Jesse sometimes fired a random shot, or discharged his pistol to frighten some poor fellow, but Frank never.

Jesse was confiding, Frank was suspicious; Jesse was careless, Frank was vigilant; Jesse was reckless, Frank, though no less bold, was cautious.

"Jesse, you will die with your boots on yet," he not infrequently told his brother.

"Have no fears," was the light-hearted answer of the merry bandit; "I know what I am about."

Frank suffered no little uneasiness from the carelessness and recklessness of his brother.

As he and his wife sat in the cabin that evening after the children had been put to bed, he said:

"To tell you truly, Annie, I do not like these Ford Boys."

"Why, Frank?"

"They seem treacherous."

"Then, why does—"

But her interrogatory was cut short by the thunder of horse's hoofs.

The outlaw grasped a repeating rifle and his wife seized a pistol. But a peculiar whistle sounded on the air.

"It is Ike—our mysterious Ike," said Frank, opening the door.

He gave a short whistle, which was answered by two more.

"What is it, Ike?" he asked.

A man sat upon a powerful black charger, white with foam. He wore a slouched hat and a cloak.

Making no reply, he handed Frank James a note, and, wheeling about, leaped his horse over the fence and was gone.

Frank unfolded the note, and read as follows:

"DEAR FRANK:—It has come at last. Jesse is killed. He was shot by Bob Ford to-day, and says Crittenden hired him to do it. Craig, Timberlake, Dick Little, and Mat Collins are all in it. If you love your brother avenge him."

"ZERILDA JAMES."

With a groan the strong man fell in a chair. His wife sprang to his side and read the note.

"Who brought it?" she asked.



"The mysterious Ike," was the reply.

"Then, heavens, it is true!" cried Annie.

"Yes, it is true, and I swear by all I hold sacred Jesse James, my poor, murdered brother, shall be avenged! Governor Crittenden, and the Fords, Dick Little, Mat Collins, and all the cowardly assassins shall die!"

### CHAPTER III.

#### FRANK JAMES AT HIS BROTHER'S FUNERAL.

FRANK JAMES' face seldom displayed emotion. Perhaps this was the first emotion Annie, his wife, had ever noticed on his features. She had known and loved the bold outlaw long before she became his wife; he had loved her in return.

He had loved her as ardently as she loved him since she had been his wife; but never before had any deep emotion so stirred his soul as did this terrible news.

"Oh, Frank, Frank, be not rash, be not too determined!" wailed his wife, throwing her arms affectionately around his neck. "Please, dear Frank, act with prudence."

"I shall do no irrational act, Annie dear; but yet I firmly swear by all I love and fear, that all engaged in the death of Jesse James shall die!"

The remainder of the night was passed miserably enough. Frank James' dearest foe must have pitied him had he seen him on this evening.

Could it be possible that Jesse James, his brother, the dauntless guerrilla who, when a beardless boy, had won a name among such desperate characters as Quantrell, Todd, Anderson, Vest, Cockrel and Edwards, was dead? He who had been the pride of Congressmen, Senators, and the pet of Shelby and Price—he whom Edwards had lionized and half of a State had praised!

Jesse dead? He could not believe it! Only a few days before he had seen him in full life and vigor. For twenty years they had ridden side by side through death and danger; for twenty years they had been in one constant, raging conflict; for twenty years, by land and sea, from ocean to ocean, had their wild adventures extended.

Now Jesse was no more! Never again would he grasp his hand, gaze into his sparkling eye, or hear his merry voice! Never again would he behold his brave bandit brother mounted upon the proud Siroc, galloping along the road, and bidding defiance to lightning, steel, steam and lead to capture or kill him!

Frank passed a sleepless night. What was he to do? His plans were not yet formed.

He urged his wife to go to bed but spent the most of the night in walking in the open air about the cabin.

Frank determined to be present at his brother's funeral. Dangerous as it might be, he would gaze once more upon the face of his brother before it was consigned to its last resting-place.

The agony of the strong man cannot be described. Occasionally a groan burst from his lips. He found it impossible to suppress it.

"One by one they all are gone, until I of all Quantrell's old guard stand alone," he said to himself. "Was it not that I have a wife and my dear children, I would not care how soon I too met my fate."

He could not sleep, yet, at the earnest entreaties of his wife, he lay down upon the bed late in the night.

He slept, but his sleep was full of wild visions. He saw his brother in all his ghastliness.

His face was stained with blood, and one hand was extended toward him, while the other pointed toward his murderers, and implored him to avenge his untimely taking off.

At early dawn he was awake. He blessed the morning that drove away such a night of horrors.

He bade his wife and children a tearful adieu.

The wife, as she sobbed upon his neck, said:

"Oh, Frank, Frank, Frank, do not forget your wife! do not forget your children! Do nothing, dear husband, that will endanger your life for their sake!"

"My dear Annie; I have ever been careful and prudent. Never has it been said by any one that Frank James was rash. I have been shocked; have been grieved by the death of my dear brother. But, darling Annie, my right hand has not lost its cunning."

Frank James, however, made no idle threat when he said he would be at his brother's funeral. He was known as one of the best actors.

Jesse, his brother, who lay dead in St. Joseph, had also been known as one of the finest actors the world had ever produced.

Their disguises were innumerable.

Frank James, by a course of logical reasoning, knew what would be the result of the St. Joseph inquest, about when and where the funeral would take place.

Timberlake and Police Commissioner Craig, from Kansas City, Mo., had gone to St. Joseph to get the body, but while the authorities were wrangling over it, Gov. Thomas T. Crittenden ordered the body turned over to the mother and wife, who were in St. Joseph.

The wildest excitement prevailed for hundreds of miles about St. Joseph. The town of Kearney was thronged with people long before twelve o'clock on the day of the funeral.

As the funeral procession moved toward the Baptist church, a tall, angular-looking Irish tramp, with a bundle on his back supported by a stick, entered the village.

"What the devil may they all bae doin' here?" he asked of one of the citizens whom he chanced to meet.

"It's a funeral," was the reply.

"A funeral! Bedad, and it must bae one o' the big ones as is gone this toime."

"It is," was the reply.

"And who may it bae that's gone dead, sure?"

"Jesse James."

"Who the devil was Jesse James?"

"A train and bank robber."

"Begorra, is that the way they honor a thrain and bank robber in this howly land o' Missouri? Bedad, a'most anybody could afford to bae a thrain and bank robber for so dacint a funeral."

"Bad as he was, he seemed to possess some virtues. The people love him for his bravery."

"Bedad, and would it bae amiss for meself to go up to that church and take a pape at that bowld bad man what's kilt entoirely?"

"Not at all, not at all," responded the citizen.

The Irishman, apparently filled with curiosity, followed close after the pall-bearers, who were J. D. Ford, J. T. Reed, Charles Scott, James Henderson, James Vaughn, Ben Flanders, and Sheriff Timberlake.

There were many eyes wet with weeping, but the grief and rage of all combined could not equal the wife and mother of the outlaw.

Mrs. Samuels, Mrs. Jesse James and her two children, Mr. and Mrs. Luther W. James, Mrs. Hall—Jesse's sister—and Mrs. Mimms—mother of Jesse's wife—were seated about the coffin.

The tall, rude-looking Irishman, with his pack in his hand, took up his position just in their rear. He seemed fresh from the Emerald Isle, and his oddity caused many a smile, notwithstanding the solemnity of the occasion.

The usher observed him, and, tapping him on the shoulder, told him he must find a seat at the rear of the audience.

"Begorra, I'd rather stay here!" the Irishman replied. "It ain't often I git to hear praste or preacher, an' bedad I want to git all the good o' what the spalpane may say on the occasion!"

Finding Pat firm, he concluded it better to let the strange tramp remain than to attempt to remove him.

The minister—Rev. R. H. Jones, of Lathrop, Mo.—opened the exercises by lining the hymn, "What a Friend we have in Jesus," also reading some passages of Scripture.

The Irish tramp bowed his head during the prayers, and seemed very attentive during the sermon, which was preached by Rev. J. M. P. Martin, a Baptist minister.

During the frequent wailings of the mother and wife, the Irish tramp seemed cool, and yet there was a cold, steely glitter in his eye.

The body was at last taken to the James' home-stead and there interred.

The Irish tramp followed all the way, and seemed to be very much interested in the proceedings. He gazed long and earnestly in the face of the dead. His lips moved not, but he made no noise, yet within he was swearing a terrible oath to avenge the murder of his brother, Jesse James.

The last sad rights were performed, and the throng of people dispersed.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### THE ATTEMPT AND FAILURE.

It was night once more. The first night after the cold clods of the valley had closed over the inanimate form of Jesse James.

The wife and mother had left the house, and gone to the new made grave to shed a few more tears before retiring.

"Oh, Jesse, my darling, how can I leave you lying in the cold, cold ground! You whom I loved so well! Oh, Jesse, Jesse!" and here the wife broke down with grief.

"Jesse," sobbed the mother, "you lie there, murdered by the hand of a coward; but you shall be avenged! Come what may, you shall be avenged!"

"Yes, you shall be avenged!" echoed a deep, solemn voice at her side.

Turning they both beheld the Irish tramp.

"Who are you?" demanded Mrs. Samuels.

"Your son," was the reply. The wig and false burnsides were removed, and sure enough before Mrs. Samuels and the young widow stood Frank James.

"Oh, Frank, Frank! Thank Heaven you are spared to me!" cried the mother, throwing her arms around his neck.

"Oh, Frank, were you at the funeral?" asked Jessie's wife.

"I was," he replied, in his solemn, grave tone.

"And did you see the face of your poor, murdered brother?" asked the mother.

"I did," he answered.

"Oh, Frank, my dear son, my heart is broken; how can it be that Jesse, the boy of whom I was so fond, lies buried in the ground?" sobbed the mother. "Governor Crittenden wanted his blood. He offered money to have him killed, and they will kill you too, Frank, if they can find you."

"Have no fears, mother, they will never find me," he said, in his grave, solemn tone.

"Trust no one, Frank, trust no one."

"Mother, I shall trust none save those above the bribes of blood offered by Tom Crittenden. I always feared the Fords. They did not ride with Quantrell, Shelby or Anderson, and are not to be trusted. There are men, now peaceable citizens who were with us in those dark days, whom we may safely trust. Men who occupy places of honor and trust in our land. Crittenden was not with us in those dark days, or he would never have bought Jesse's blood. But dearly shall it be to him. Edwards, Vest, Cockrell and Shelby, our friends who have stood by us for twenty



years, will condemn such acts. There are a few more of our desperate gang yet alive. I can recruit others, and the world will learn that Jesse James can be avenged even to the taking of the life of a governor."

"Oh, Frank, do be careful," sobbed the mother.

"Careful, mother; I will be careful. I never do anything rashly, and in these movements caution and prudence shall be my marked characteristics. In fact, mother, the success of my plans depend upon the cautious manner in which I proceed."

For a few moments they stood in silence above the grave. A tear rolled down the pale cheek of the young widow, and she seemed to have become more calm.

She well knew the merit of Frank's words.

He had sworn to kill Governor Crittenden, the Fords, and all connected with Jesse's untimely taking off. Dick Little and his mysterious wife, whose hands had been red with the blood of a relative, should suffer from the avenging bullet or steel.

"I must go," Frank said, turning about. "My time is precious, and I must be going."

"Be careful! oh, Frank, be careful!"

"Have no fears, mother, my good right hand has not lost its cunning. Prudence shall characterize my every movement."

He turned about and was gone. Immediately after the departure of Frank James, the wife and mother of the dead bandit turned about and returned to the house.

Frank started on foot for Liberty. His plans were scarcely matured, but he intended to make his way to Kansas City and there await developments. He was embarked in an enterprise which might require years of patience and toil.

His whole life was given over to it, and his day thoughts and night dreams must be only of vengeance--vengeance!

It was just about daylight when he reached Liberty. The lazy little town had not awakened from its slumbers, and the quiet streets seemed deserted by all save a few dogs and an occasional teamster, who was harnessing his horses to meet the morning train, soon to be due.

Frank made his way to the depot, and there found a few persons shivering in the cold, cheerless waiting-room.

There were ladies and gentlemen, in traveling costume, conversing on the all-important topic of the day, the death of the great outlaw, Jesse W. James.

The rude-looking Irishman attracted little attention. A lady who sat shivering upon the waiting seat, which is as uncomfortable as depot waiting seats usually are, looked a little curious at the Irish tramp.

He found a seat and laid his bundle and stick by the side of it.

"I wonder where the devil the boss is?" the Irishman asked. No one making any reply, he continued: "I don't see what the devil he wants to fraze dacint people to death fur, at all, at all."

The last remark elicited a smile from some of the waiting passengers, and a fat man, who had been dozing in his seat, said, without looking up:

"Never mind, Pat, the train will be along in a few minutes, and we can then be going."

In a very short time the whistle sounded, and a few moments later the train for Kansas City thundered in. There was a momentary bustling about, and the passengers climbed aboard.

Among others was the Irishman, carrying his bundle with him. But little notice was given to Pat, as the train thundered on to Kansas City.

He was seen to get off the train, and where he

went no one knew. The Irishman's conduct seemed a little curious.

He hung around the jail in which Dick Little was confined, for several hours.

Suddenly he started. A woman's stately step and erect head had caught his attention.

"It is she," he said to himself. "It is Matt Collins. She is one of the principal instruments in Jesse's taking off. Why not commence the avenging with her? Make her the first victim?"

Mattie Collins entered the jail, and remained there for nearly two hours.

The Irishman, in the meanwhile, remained patiently on the outside, awaiting her return. He kept his ground, in spite of the repeated commands from the policeman to "move on."

"Where the devil shall I move to?" he would interrogatively answer.

He saw the woman emerge from the jail, and followed her, keeping at a sufficient distance so as not to excite suspicion.

The woman went to a hotel, and, after satisfying himself that she was stopping there for the present, Frank James changed his disguise and went to the same hotel as a New York commercial traveler.

He was flashily dressed, wore a pair of blue goggles, full set of whiskers, and a heavy gold watch-chain.

For two days he remained there, and on the third night awaited with a sharp dagger, in the hall, for the woman on whose life he had determined, to enter her room.

"I had just as well stain these carpets with blood to commence this as to wait longer," he said.

An hour passed, and she did not come.

The night watchman in the hall inquired why he was there so long. Frank had some excuse, and was permitted to pace up and down in front of Mattie's door.

"Are you waiting to see that woman?" the watchman finally asked, nodding his head toward Mattie's door.

"I am," said Frank James.

"Then you might just as well be in bed. She left the city this evening."

So Frank's first effort at vengeance was a failure, but he did not despair.

## CHAPTER V.

### A PISTOL SHOT.

THERE were others engaged in the betrayal and death of Jesse James than Dick Little, Mattie Collins, the Fords, Mrs. Bolt, and Governor Crittenden.

Frank knew every one who had been engaged in it. They were all doomed men, the moment he had taken his oath, and no power on earth could save them. Crittenden could not surround the governor's mansion with a line of soldiers too deep to prevent his penetrating the lines.

The jail that held the Fords and Dick Little did not contain sufficient strength to prevent Frank James entering and putting an end to their existence.

After the failure to kill Mattie Collins, Frank James then started for another quarter of the city.

"John Small must be there. He has been indirectly instrumental in Jesse's betrayal, and he shall not be exempt," said Frank to himself, as he walked along the street.

It was still night, and there were few persons on the street save the policemen.

"Let me see. John Small lives in a house at the extreme end of this street. It is too late for cars, so I will walk," said Frank to himself.

"I say, stranger, where be ye a-goin'?" said a man, crossing over the street to where Frank stood. "By Jimminy, stranger, guess I is—hic—a little off."

"You seem to be."

"Perlice—hic—been after me—he, he, he—and they ch-chased me—he, he, he—all around, and a—hic—round, but couldn't git at me at all."

"Is that so?"

"It is—hic—he, he, he!"

"Well, what do you want with me?" asked Frank, not a little disturbed at being halted.

"I—he, he, he—want you to take me home—yas, I d-o-o—hic!"

"Where do you live?"

"I live in Edina."

"Missouri?"

"Umph—humph!"

"Well, that's about a hundred and fifty miles away. I am sorry I cannot accommodate you."

"Umph, humph—hic!" drawled the drunken man. "He, he, he! you—hic—are a clever feller, I know, take 'ome."

"I can't; I have not time," said Frank, becoming more and more impatient.

"Y—hic—yes, you 'ave; won't take long."

"It will take more time than I can spare."

"Bet ye do—he, he, he—hic!"

"Well, I'll bet I don't," said Frank, in a tone the gravity of which was not a little amusing.

"Guess ye don't know me—he, he, he—hic!"

"I am certain I don't."

"Well, that's a good un. Don't—hic—ye know me?" drawled the drunken fellow, getting nearer Frank than was comfortable.

"No, I don't, and, what is more, don't care to know you."

"Well—he, he, he—that's a good un."

"Now do you clear out, go off, and let me 'alone, or I will have the police take charge of you."

"What fur—he, he, he—hic!"

Frank started up the street, but the drunken man grasped his arm, and in a drawling tone said:

"W—w—what—fur, he, he, he—hic!"

"Take that, fool!" cried Frank, out of humor, striking the drunken man in the face with his fist, and felling him to the pavement.

"Oh, now what is the use?" drawled the man, apparently more mortified than angry at the treatment he had received.

Frank James now having got rid of his persistent companion, hurried on.

A rather curious thing occurred as soon as Frank James was out of sight of the man he had knocked down.

The fellow started up and sprang to his feet without the least appearance of intoxication.

"It's him!" he cried. "There can be no mistake; it is Frank James. He has the limp in his walk, and everything. I'm good for five thousand before morning."

So saying, he started off very much in the manner of a sleuth-hound after its prey.

The shrewd outlaw was for once outwitted.

He did not dream that the detectives were aware of his presence in the city.

He did not dream they were aware or even had suspicion of his presence in Missouri, but they did.

They knew not only where he was, but they also knew that he was engaged in an act of vengeance. The success of Robert Ford in killing Jesse James had set a thousand detectives to work studying means to kill or capture his equally notorious brother, Frank.

Perhaps out of the one thousand, nine hundred and ninety were novices. Men and boys who had paid three dollars for a certificate of membership of some detective association, which never existed.

There were ten, then, men of experience and genuine detectives.

Above all men to fear by outlaws, is a detect-



ive of experience and originality. Without originality he follows in the course of some other detective, whose plans are already known to the outlaw.

John Burns was a man of originality. He could plan plans no one ever thought of, and execute in a manner calculated to even astonish himself.

The idea of playing drunk and getting near enough Frank James to find out who was, was original with him.

"I have found the game," he said. "Now, how in the name of creation am I to bag it?"

There was a question any man might ask.

Frank James was not the man whom an officer would tap on the shoulder and say:

"You're wanted."

The facts are no man would be safe in doing so.

The answer would be a leaden bullet or a steel blade.

But John Burns was not a man to grow faint-hearted. He followed close after Frank James, keeping a cocked revolver in his hand, determined, if the worst came, to shoot him down, as his brother Jesse had been shot.

Frank had approached the house of John Small, which stood near the banks of the swiftly flowing Missouri.

The house was closed. All within was dark.

Although the moon shone for an hour or two yet, the night was so cloudy that its rays failed to reach the earth.

Keeping well within the shadows of some trees along the river bank, Frank James got in front of a window that overlooked the river.

Taking a small pebble from the pocket of his vest, he tossed it against the pane of glass.

There was no response.

"Can he be gone?" Frank asked himself. "No, he is in that room. How am I to reach it?"

While looking about the ground his eyes fell upon a ladder.

"Aha!" exclaimed Frank James. "Just the very thing. I will climb up there, cut my friend's throat and escape."

He carefully placed the ladder against the wall of the house, and began the ascent.

Not a moment would he have to spare if he found John Small in the room.

If John was awake it would be a fight, and he would have to rely on his revolver; if asleep, he could stab him and then fly for his life.

The man was doomed, and must die.

In one hand Frank held a revolver; he began to climb with the other.

Scarcely had he ascended five steps on the ladder, before he heard some one walking below him.

He took four or five more upward strides, and then paused to listen.

He heard some one moving carefully about in the darkness, and suddenly felt them strike a foot against the bottom of the ladder.

There was an exclamation of surprise.

"He must be up there," a voice whispered.

Onward and upward Frank continued to climb; higher and higher he ascended, until at the window. It was down.

But feeling about, he found it unlocked, and carefully he raised it. There were lowered curtains, and through them a light streamed.

He heard his intended victim cough. What was he to do? The man inside was not asleep; there was some one below, looking for him.

To enter involved a fight, and he had reason to believe the house was surrounded with police.

He resolved to spring in, shoot down Small, and chance it on making his escape.

Just as he came to this conclusion, and had made ready for the spring, crack went a shot

from below, and the ball clipped a lock of Frank's hair from his head.

At one tremendous bound he leaped in the room, through curtain and all; the window fell with a crash, and the outlaw lay sprawling upon the floor at the feet of his enemy.

#### CHAPTER VI.

##### A DEATH AND A FLIGHT.

JOHN SMALL was sitting in a chair in his second-story room reading a newspaper. He had on a dressing-gown and slippers, and was not a little surprised to see a man come head first through the window.

His surprise was turned to terror when he discovered that the man was an old associate in crime.

"You here? Great Heaven!" he cried, as he started to his feet.

"I am."

"You are pursued," gasped John, trembling in every limb.

"Yes, by blood-hounds set on me by such traitors as you are yourself," cried Frank James, in a low, firm voice.

There was little or no excitement expressed in Frank James' manner. He never betrayed excitement. His eyes, however, betrayed a cold, steely glitter that was death.

"What do you mean?" asked the traitor, trembling in every limb.

"I mean this, John Small, that you are one of the many who betrayed Jesse James to his death."

"Frank, you are mistaken."

"I am not."

"You are."

"Keep silent, John Small. I have not long to stay, and must get through this work rapidly, for a blockhead detective is waiting down-stairs to take me as soon as I emerge from the house. To convince the world he has no brains he is trying to capture me alone."

"What has that to do with me, or I with it?" asked Small.

"Nothing, save that he is another of your hirelings. John Small, you are a traitor. You have betrayed our once gallant band, along with Dillon, Long and Little, the Fords, and Mattie Collins. Gov. Crittenden has bought you all, soul and body."

"Oh, Frank, Frank, forgive me. I—I—swear——"

"Hold, John Small. Do not perjure yourself. If you believe there is a God, and a life after death, be careful what you say, for your end is near."

"Oh, no, no, Frank! You cannot mean what you say!" wailed the terrified man.

"I do. Now keep perfectly quiet, as it is my design to do this job neatly, and not mutilate you. I don't want to give you unnecessary pain, but you must die!"

Frank leveled his pistol at the wretch, who howled with terror.

A loud knock came at the door from below.

"Hold still, John, one shot must do it all," said Frank, coolly.

It was not his desire to merely frighten the man, for Frank was in deadly earnest. He kept his revolver pointed at the cowering wretch, who wailed: "Don't, don't, Frank! there don't! You are just trying to frighten me."

"Hold still a moment and you will find out."

The man now howled with terror, and Frank James became aware that the entire house was becoming alarmed.

He caught a quick, sure aim and pulled the trigger.

Crack!

Sharp and keen rang out the report of the pistol.

John Small sank to the floor on his knees; his head fell back a moment, until the back touched the wall.

The blood was spinning in a fine, red stream, from a small hole in the center of his forehead.

Frank knew the work was done. The first victim of his vengeance had fallen.

As he sprang to the window, the body swayed a single moment, and then fell forward upon its face.

Frank snatched the curtains away from the window and felt for the ladder.

It was gone.

The detective had doubtless removed the ladder, to prevent him escaping by it, while he effected an entrance at the front door.

He had doubtless summoned a dozen or more policemen to his aid, and the house was surrounded.

What should he do? He was not long in determining.

Snatching a quilt from the bed, he fastened one corner of it to the window sill and, letting it out, climbed down as far as it reached and dropped to the ground.

"There he goes!" shouted a voice from the opposite side of the house, the moment they heard him drop upon the ground.

"Halt!" shouted another voice but a few feet away.

It was too dark to see, but he knew that some half dozen men or more, were not far away, and through the darkness the glittering stars of policemen could be seen.

"Halt, or I will fire!" shouted a policeman.

Frank James sprang away, and at three or four bounds was again in the darkest shadows of the trees.

Crack! crack! crack! rang out three shots from the revolver of the policeman on his right.

The detective who had summoned the police force to aid him, now ran around to the rear of the house, and saw the window open and the quilt hanging from it.

"Curse him!" roared Burns, "he has escaped me at last; fire on him!"

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

A volley of half a dozen shots rang out on the night air, and the bullets flew like hail about Frank James' head.

But the highwayman had heard these sounds before.

The whistle of leaden hail did not frighten him.

He had not been touched, though one bullet had gone completely through his hat.

He wheeled about, and fired a shot in return.

One of the policemen uttered a yell of rage and pain, and fell to his knees.

Two more of his companions stopped by his side and asked if he was hurt.

The others had gone but a short distance, when they began to return one at a time, until all had come back to see if he was really badly hurt.

Frank James in the meanwhile was improving the spare moments thus given him. He was flying as fast as he could along the river-bank.

The entire city seemed to be alarmed. Policemen were springing their rattles in every direction.

"What is it?" shouted some one from the hill above.

"Murder, murder! I am killed!" cried the man who had been struck by Frank's random ball.

In the meanwhile, the inmates of the house had



broken into the room where John Small had been, and found only his lifeless corpse.

Their cries of horror were mingled on the air with the shouts of excitement without.

"Who done this?"

"Who was it?"

"Where is he?"

"How many were they?"

"Why did they do it?" and hundreds of other questions were asked in the moment of intense excitement, which swayed the vast throng of people who crowded about the house where the tragedy had occurred.

The detective, John Burns, could easily have answered the question, but he determined not to do so.

Frank James had given him the slip, and it was his policy to recapture him if possible.

He would be on his trail again soon, this he very well knew, and as the police through their blundering had failed to aid him, he determined to work out his own plans.

He left them with their wounded man, whose wound was only a scratch, and hurried away alone, muttering to himself:

"There is not a man on the police force in Kansas City with courage or common sense. No wonder the James Boys have had it all their own way so long."

## CHAPTER VII.

### FRANK JAMES AND MATTIE COLLINS.

FRANK JAMES ran down the river bank for two or three hundred paces, and then turned up into the town again.

"One of the wretched scoundrels who assisted in the taking off of Jesse is now no more," he said to himself, as he ran up a narrow alley.

Entering a cross street he preceeded down it at a brisk walk, but not a run.

In the melee and confusion that ensued on the entrance of the house, murder and flight, Frank James had lost his cane.

He limped some, but it would require a close observer to know he was at all lame.

"Say, fellow," said a policeman, suddenly starting up before him, "what's all that noise down there on the river?"

"Some drunken row," replied Frank. "You better go down and see."

"Were you there?"

"I was near there."

"See here; hold on, friend, don't be so fast," said the policeman, walking up rather closer to Frank James than he desired. "Now wait, and tell me something about who it was who fired that shot."

"Which shot? There was a dozen fired."

"Well, who fired all of them?"

"I don't know."

"I guess you do."

"I guess I don't."

"Well, we'll see."

"How so?"

"I'll just arrest you on suspicion, and if you come clear I'll stand the treat."

"But I'm in a hurry."

"I can't help it."

"You had better not bother me."

"Why?"

"I have important business up-town."

"It is now near midnight, and rather a strange hour for attending to important business."

"Nevertheless, I must go," said Frank, walking away. "My business is so important that I am compelled to attend to it to-night."

"Well, you won't."

"You had better not prevent me."

They had gone along the street until they came to an unfrequented part of it, where there were few lamps and the street very dark.

"Keep away from me," said Frank.

"No, sir, I am going with you."

"Why?"

"I am determined to see who you are and where you are going."

"Then I am sorry to leave you, but I must do so," said Frank, coolly.

Before the policeman could make any effort toward defending himself, Frank had struck him a furious whack on the head with his revolver butt. The fellow fell and rolled over on the pavement into the gutter.

He was utterly insensible.

"I am sorry to leave you thus, my friend, but my necessity and your perverseness forced it upon me."

Frank James ran up the street a few moments, when he saw a man coming toward him. He was mounted upon one horse and leading another.

Every few moments he sounded a peculiarly shrill whistle. Frank knew that whistle. But one man on earth had power to send forth such notes.

He paused in a dark part of the street, and as the man galloped along the street near him he said:

"Ike, Ike, Ike, is it you?"

The horseman reined in his horses and nodded. It was the mysterious Ike, the bearer of many messages for the James Boys.

"Ike, did you bring me a horse?"

The man nodded.

"Where did you come from?"

He pointed south-west.

"Ike, do you know where the Fords are?"

"In jail," he spoke in a whisper.

"At St. Joseph?"

He nodded.

"Where is Mat Collins?"

"Sedalia."

"Aha! I'll soon be on her trail. Never did a fiend pursue with more deadly hatred and determination to exterminate than I will the murderers of my brother."

As Frank spoke he vaulted in the saddle.

The horse he had mounted was his brother's famous black steed called Siroc.

The mysterious Ike had in the meanwhile wheeled his horse about and was galloping down the street.

He was gone before Frank had an opportunity to speak to him.

He was almost a mystery to the men he befriended. They only knew him as the mysterious Ike, the faithful messenger.

"Well, the city is growing rather warm for me, and I must be getting away from here," said Frank.

He gave Siroc the rein, and thundered down the street at a break-neck pace.

"Halt, there! halt—halt, or I'll fire!" cried a policeman, springing in front of the horseman.

"There has been too much rumpus down there to allow you to get by so easily."

"Clear the road!"

"Not much! Draw up, or I'll swear I'll shoot!"

Crack! went the policeman's pistol.

It is evident that Frank James was not expecting so resolute a resistance on the part of the officer.

The ball passed through Frank's coat-collar and brushed his cheek.

Siroc never shied at a pistol-shot, but dashed on against the officer.

Just as the horse struck the policeman with his breast Frank James raised his pistol by the muzzle and struck the officer down with the butt.

There was nothing now to impede his progress, and the outlaw was soon out of the city.

On, on, and on, the horseman thundered.

Daylight came, and he was far out in the

country, flying along lanes, past farm houses, and crossing bridges.

The morning was fair, but tardy spring had retained the leaves and flowers.

Occasionally a farmer could be seen plowing in some barren-looking field.

He would pause a moment to look at the strange horseman flying so wildly along the road.

The sun arose higher and higher in the heavens, until it was directly over the head of Frank James.

Frank was tireless in his pursuit of vengeance, but Siroc, though remarkable, was but a horse.

He must have food, or he could not stand the hard travel forced upon him.

He came to a farm-house.

Halting in front of the tall, narrow gate, he halloed.

A dog barked.

"Halloa!"

The house was closed.

"Halloa!" again. The dog became furious at being disturbed, and ran with all the rage of an infuriated tiger toward the horseman.

It was evident, however, that the animal intended to keep well out of the way of danger.

A farmer came to the door.

Frank made a sign, which the farmer seemed to comprehend at once.

"Heavens! Frank James, why are you here?" said the ex-guerrilla and Confederate. "Why are you so daring? The officers were along here not ten minutes ago."

"I can't help that," said Frank; "I must have my horse fed. He is unable to carry me without food and water."

The man seemed greatly agitated.

He took the rein Frank tossed him, and Frank followed him to the stable.

When the horse was stabled and fed, Frank and the farmer returned to the house.

"You want your dinner, do you not?" asked the farmer.

"Of course; and tell the women folks to be quick about it."

They entered the house, the farmer trembling like an aspen. Frank noticed his agitation, and could hardly understand it.

As they passed from the hall into the sitting-room, a young woman started up with a shriek of terror.

Frank fixed his eyes on her, and in a moment recognized her.

Frank James and Mattie Collins stood face to face.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### REVENGE AND POLITICIANS.

"Die, traitress!" hissed Frank James, snatching a pistol from his belt and cocking it.

"Hold, don't! don't dare do that!" cried the farmer, very much excited.

"I will. I have sworn that every one connected in any way with Jesse's untimely taking off shall die, be they man, woman or child."

"Oh, Frank, for Heaven's sake, do not murder a woman!"

"I care not if she were a woman a thousand times, she shall die."

"Frank, Frank! why will you kill me?" cried Mattie Collins.

"You shall die, because to save the worthless Dick Little, you sold Jesse."

"I did not."

"Mat, do not die with a lie on your lips, for you shall die."

The eyes of the resolute woman flashed a defiant and vengeful fire; but she was pale as death.

Frank raised his pistol to shoot her in the head, but the horrified farmer struck up his arm.



Crack!

The sharp report rang out on the air, and the ball whizzed into the ceiling overhead.

Had not the farmer struck up the highwayman's pistol hand, the bullet must have struck the girl in the center of the forehead.

"Fly, Mat; run for your life!" cried the farmer, seizing Frank James' arm.

"Gid Dugger, are you, too, going to betray me?" said Frank James, struggling in the strong arms of the farmer.

"No, no, Frank, I will not harm you, but to kill Mat Collins in my house would ruin me, your best friend."

Mattie was not slow to take advantage of the moments given her.

She fled from the house, out at the door, and around the smoke-house, where the farmer kept his bacon.

"Curse her, she shall not escape me this time!" cried Frank, dragging the farmer, who still held him stoutly, to the rear door.

Just as Mat turned the corner of the smoke-house, Frank James tore his pistol arm loose.

"Murderess, die!" he shouted.

Crack!

Crack!

The bullets fired by the avenger struck the corner of the smoke-house, and one of them sent several splinters flying into the neck of the frightened woman.

Believing that she was killed, she uttered shrieks of terror and dismay, but continued to fly at her utmost speed.

A clatter of horses' hoofs was heard.

"Run for your life, Frank!" cried the farmer, who was more dead than alive with terror.

"Why, traitor?"

"Timberlake and some of his gang are coming!"

The farmer fell by a blow from the fist of the enraged highwayman.

"All not true to a friend or a cause should die!" he cried, and cocking his pistol, he leveled it at the prostrate farmer.

"Oh, Heaven, spare my husband, my dear husband!" cried the farmer's wife.

Then Frank James thought of Jesse's widow, and for her sake spared the man's life.

He ran out to the stable, mounted Siroc, and galloped away across a field, as Timberlake and his men, a dozen in number, dismounted at the front gate.

Fortunately they did not see Frank James, and he made his way to a heavy body of timber and was soon buried from view.

"Curse the infernal farmer! I could have killed her there and erased two names off my book, growled Frank James, "if he had not been so chicken-hearted. But I will get her yet. She cannot escape me. As I am so near Sedalia I will go down and have a chat with the major."

Who was meant by the major the reader could hardly be supposed to guess, and he will be greatly astonished to know that he was a man claiming to be respectable, and the leading politician of his State.

Siroc had not had time to eat his dinner, and his rider had not tasted food for nearly twenty-four hours, but neither seemed any the worse for it.

The sun had not set yet when a strange horseman rode into Sedalia.

He was a plain, common-place, farmer-looking man, and excited but little comment as he rode into town.

He rode to a small house in the suburbs, and dismounted.

A man who had been observing him came to the door.

"You come, hey?" said the man, with a grave smile. "I was expecting you."

"How did you know I was coming?" Frank asked.

"Because your mysterious Ike said so," was the answer.

"Has he been here?"

"Yes."

"And gone?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"Don't know. No one knows when he's coming, or where he is when gone."

"Well, is the major in town?"

"Yes."

"The senator?"

"Yes."

"Good. I want to see them."

"Go in, I'll take care o' yer hoss, Frank; ye'll be all safe here."

Frank James dismounted, and gave Siroc to his friend. He entered the house, to be warmly greeted by a lady who had words of sympathy to offer at the death of his dear brother.

"We must all die," she said, "and those need have no fear who die in the Lord."

Frank knew Jesse had not lived a life recommended by the Holy Writ, and seemed to not care about commenting on his hereafter.

After Siroc had been cared for, and Frank James had enjoyed an excellent supper, he inquired of the man if he could inform him where he could meet his friends that night.

"I will ascertain," said the man, and putting on his hat he hurried away.

He returned, after being away a short time, with the announcement:

"I have seen the major, and he says come to his office."

Frank knew who the *major* was. He had known the major ever since they rode on Centralia's plains, and never yet had he refused the James Boys' aid when hard pressed by pursuers.

At dark he set out for the major's office.

The streets were dark yet, as but few lamps had been lighted.

No one accompanied Frank, and his broad-brimmed hat was drawn down over his eyes, so as to completely conceal his features.

He had a cloak drawn around his shoulders, and was, in fact, a rather suspicious-looking character.

The office was reached, and he, ascending the stairway, entered it. Pausing at the door he rapped.

A cautious step, and some one opened the door. There appeared the face of the major.

"Frank!" he gasped, clasping his hand.

"My dear major!" was all that Frank James could say.

Emotions strange and uncontrollable took possession of both men.

Outlaws have tender spots in their hearts, and these men were affected. True, but one was an outlaw; the other, honored and respected, was in full sympathy with the train-robbers, having received many costly presents from them.

"You know all, major?" said Frank.

"I do, Frank; and a more dastardly act could never have been perpetrated," said the gallant ex-guerrilla major.

"Are you alone?"

"No—I have two friends in here, who will not betray us; have no fears of that."

They then entered, and the major introduced the highwayman to Senator — and Judge —, of the — judicial circuit of Missouri. He had known the senator, who had long been an intimate friend of the departed Jesse. Jesse had contributed several thousand dollars to the senator's election.

After he had formed the acquaintance of the North Missouri judge, who had never known the

James Boys, but, belonging to the same party, was anxious to meet such illustrious men.

"Crittenden thinks he has made his mark," said the senator to Frank James.

"I shall make my mark," said Frank, in a tone which had not the least effort at humor about it.

"It was a diabolical murder," said his honor, the judge.

"Yes, an outrageous murder," said the eloquent senator. "When I am asked abroad from what State I hail, I shall blush to say I am a Missourian. And when my voice is heard in the halls of Congress, to the admiration of my many friends, it will pain me to hear the reporters whisper 'That is the silver-tongued orator from Missouri.'"

"Crittenden shall die," said Frank James, firmly. "I will kill the Governor of Missouri, if I am hung for it in ten minutes."

"You would get off very easy if you were tried before me," said Judge —, whose round head and pug nose were in the air, and who supported both hands on the top of a *gold-headed* cane, while he stared into vacancy. This was a favorite position for his dignity.

"I presume I will have his excellency for an opponent the next election," said the senator.

"Yes, the big-headed fool," growled the major. "He has called a special term of the Legislature, for the pretended purpose of re-districting the State, but in reality to have the Legislature endorse his course."

"They will not do it," said the senator, with a horrible oath.

"Never!" added his honor, with an oath intended to be equally as horrible as the senator's.

"No; when the Legislature meets," said the major, "he will find that Speaker Basham will rule such a question out of order. He says he will. They will appeal then to the house, and not more than ten Democrats will support a resolution endorsing the governor's act."

"What will the Republican members do?" asked the senator.

"They will endorse the resolution, and hold it in order," said the major. "The last one will vote for it, because they would be glad to have every Democrat in the State assassinated."

Then the major, after swearing a few brimstone oaths, declared it would never do to elect another loyal Democrat in Missouri, as they would disrupt the entire party, and thought no more of having a useful member of the party shot down than if he was a wolf.

"But, Frank, gather together the well-trying remnant of your old band. Recruit from everywhere you can, and by the blood of your murdered brother, swear to be avenged. Cut out Gov. Crittenden's heart, and kill every man, woman and child connected in any way with Jesse's death and betrayal."

"Amen!" ejaculated both the senator and judge.

"That is just what I have sworn to do," said Frank James, bitterly.

"Give me your hand, sir, and if the deed is done in my circuit have no fear of hanging," said the judge.

"I will defend you gratis," said the senator, "and it will remove a dangerous opponent from my path."

## CHAPTER IX.

### A FIGHT IN THE WOODS.

It was late in the afternoon of the second day after the events related in our last chapter.

A solitary horseman was riding through a grand old forest a few miles north of Sedalia.

A heavy thunder-storm had just passed over the earth, and the trees and leaves of the forest were soaked with rain.



"Well, Siroc, we have but begun our work," said Frank James, for the solitary horseman was he. "We must now to St. Joseph, and see if we cannot get a shot at one of the Fords. Your poor master must be avenged."

The roads were filled with water from the recent rains, and every step Siroc made the mud splashed all over the lower part of his body.

Siroc was going at a rapid gallop. Hill and dale rose and fell beneath his flying hoofs, and on he kept.

Suddenly the girth of the saddle became loosened, and Frank drew rein beneath a large oak tree to mend it.

He had just succeeded in mending it when a man dropped from the limbs of the tree above him, alighting in the saddle from which Frank had dismounted.

Another and another sprang from the treetop, and in two seconds Frank James was surrounded by half a dozen men, headed by the detective, John Burns.

To act at once would be a characteristic of one of the James Boys.

Although surrounded, surprised, and confronted with overwhelming odds, Frank James did not for a moment lose his presence of mind.

One of the men had seized him by the shoulders, and in a moment, by a dexterous move, he had whirled him upon his back.

Another came forward, but now he had grasped a pistol and fired a shot. The ball grazed the man's cheek, and made a sharply defined red streak down the back of the detective's neck.

"Curse him!" cried Burns. "Hold him down, for he is as slippery as an eel."

Frank now confronted two of his assailants face to face.

Leveling his pistol at one, he pulled the trigger.

Crack! rang out the report on the damp woods, and the bullet crashed completely through the man's brain.

He fell limp and lifeless in the middle of the road; then, with the butt of his pistol, he struck the second a blow in the face, which laid him senseless in the road.

The fight was too warm now, and movements too quick for any cue to speak or lay a plan.

Everything depended on the instantaneous action of Frank James.

He could not afford to lose a second. Every instant his enemies had to get around him would make his chances for escape more and more doubtful.

The men were trying to spring upon him, but his rapid movements invariably caused them to miss their man.

"Down him!" shouted Burns. "Shoot him down! The reward is as much dead as alive!"

The man upon the horse sat still in the saddle; but Siroc, seeing his master in trouble, sprang to his side.

"Get down!" roared Frank, leveling his pistol at the man in the saddle. "Dismount, or I'll blow your brains out!"

The man tried to rein Siroc back, but Frank had seized the bits.

Siroc reared in the air and the man lost his balance and fell to the ground.

At a bound, Frank James was in the saddle.

"Friends and furies, don't let him away!" roared Burns, cocking his pistol to shoot the daring highwayman.

One of the men nearest sprang at Siroc's head.

Crack! went Frank's pistol, and with a yell of pain the man sprang into the air, and fell to the earth a corpse.

"Away, good Siroc!" cried Frank to his horse.

Siroc sprang away at his utmost speed.

"Fire!" roared the detective Burns.

Bang!

Bang!

Crack!

Crack! went four shots, the bullets whistling

like hail about Frank James, as soon as his horse started up at a gallop. He threw himself down upon the saddle-bow. One of the bullets grazed his shoulder-blade almost the whole length.

"Fire again!" roared Burns, and they kept up a popping away at man and horse as long as they were in sight.

"Mount your horses and let's pursue him. By all that's good and mighty, we will have him, if such a thing is possible."

It was but the work of a moment for the detectives to spring into their saddles and start after the bold outlaw.

But after a run of an hour night came on, and Frank James had not been seen.

They were compelled to give up the chase, pick up their two dead men, and hurry to the nearest depot station.

## CHAPTER X.

### FRANK JAMES IN JEFFERSON CITY.

Gov. CRITTENDEN called the Legislature of Missouri to convene at Jefferson City, the capital of the State, on the 18th day of April, 1882, for the purpose of re-districting the State. According to the census of 1880, and recent acts of Congress, Missouri was entitled to an additional congressman.

This special term was looked upon with no little interest by the politicians of the State. Many were the newspaper comments upon the term.

Some papers favored it in one issue and condemned it in the next.

A new excitement had taken possession not only of the State, but the entire country. This was the death of Jesse James.

All loyal-hearted men, who desired peace and law, approved the harsh means adopted by the governor for the removal of the desperado.

A few men who loved outlawry, theft and murder, condemned the act.

There was a strong probability that the affair might affect the politics of the State. One branch of the party in power approved the act of the governor, and the other branch opposed it.

The day for the assembly of the Legislature came.

Of all the motley crowds ever gathered beneath one roof, the Missouri Legislature would take the premium for being the most peculiar.

There you find the pompous city politician full of argument and beer from St. Louis. There are others of the shrewd legal caste of the Charlie Johnson type.

Then we have two or three types of the German; one of which is enterprising, skillful, and good, honest legislators. Another, miserly and ignorant.

There you find the cool, embryo statesman from the North, with long-winded speeches on subjects impossible of comprehension, and the hatchet and owl-faced granger from the South-east, whose only aim in attending the Legislature is to get the wolf-scalp bill through.

They can only talk of wolves and rats, and as to other legislation they care nothing.

There were many strangers and lobbyists in the city at this special term.

The sole idea of it was to get the State re-districted, it is true, but even this required an immense amount of lobbying.

Some men ambitious to go to Congress had their friends on hand ready to "set up a district for himself."

It would require a great deal of money to make some political maps, and money was on hand.

The question of the governor's action in hiring assassins to kill Jesse James was now undergoing a thorough discussion. Those who favored the killing of Jesse thought a resolution would be in order; those who had always been his friends said it would not.

"We are convened for a special purpose," said one prominent statesman; "we have no right to go outside of that purpose, which is to re-district the State. Gov. Tom has sown his wild oats; now let him reap the harvest."

Others, and they were in a large majority, held the same views.

Strangers at the capital were not a few.

The tall stranger, dressed in a suit of black and looking very much like a clergyman, excited no particular attention.

He was quiet and unassuming.

In registering at the hotel he signed his name as Charles Mathews, of St. Louis.

He arrived late in the day, and, having registered, walked about the streets.

It was dark, and he carried a cane in his hand.

The gentleman was slightly lame, for he had a limp which was just perceptible.

This man, as the reader doubtless surmises, was none other than Frank James.

He was in Jefferson City for a purpose.

"If Speaker Bashaw holds the resolution in order," said Frank, to himself, "I will be sure to put a bullet between his eyes. They shall not shoot down my brother in cold blood and then gloat over it."

Frank James was making no idle threat.

He had been assured by several members that Bashaw would be firm against the resolution.

The highwayman cast an occasional glance at the governor's mansion.

There was a strong guard patrolling the grounds.

"The coward!" said Frank, contemptuously. "He has inclosed himself in an arsenal; well for him he does so, and by all that's good and great it is well that he does so."

He was walking along in a meditative mood, and paying but little attention to who were passing him on either side.

"Let me see," he said. "There is the governor, the big bug, to commence on. Then there are the Fords, Dick Little, Mat Collins, Allen Dillon, and Tom Long yet to kill. The governor is in his mansion, a guard of armed men about him; the Fords and Dick Little in jail, which makes it worse than madness to attempt their assassination; Mat Collins I have twice failed on, and Allen Dillon and Tom Long I have been unable to find."

Some one was approaching him, and just as Frank was in the act of stepping aside to allow him to pass, the stranger exclaimed:

"G-r-a-cious!"

"Helloa!" said Frank.

"G-r-a-cious!" repeated the man.

"Well, that's two of them," said Frank, approaching as near wit as he ever ventured.

"G-r-a-cious!"

"Three; have you another?"

"What are ye doin' here?"

"Seeking justice."

"Then you'd better go away."

"Why?"

"You are too near the Missouri supreme court to get it."

"I understand," Frank replied. "Your wit is good, but you misinterpret what I say. I am going to administer this justice myself."

"That will do, then; but don't seek to have others do it. Missouri courts are just the opposite of justice."

If a negro ever spoke a truth it was the stranger who had confronted Frank James.

"So I have always understood," Frank an-



swered. "At least, I will never risk my case in their hands. I am going to be judge, jury, and executive officer."

"Good," said the man, who was a friend to the James Boys, and a member of the Legislature.

"Do you not know, Frank, that you are exposing yourself to great personal danger?"

"Not much."

"They will soon suspicion you."

"Well?"

"Then you will have a dozen detectives after you."

"I got away with six about a week ago."

"Do not boast, Frank; remember Jess and his sad fate."

"I do," said Frank. "It was that what brought me here to avenge him."

"Do you mean to kill some one?"

"Yes; perhaps many."

"The governor is getting uneasy."

"Well may he be, for I will kill him before this is through with, if it takes me fifty years to do it."

"What, Frank?"

"I mean it," he responded.

"Do you mean to kill the governor?"

"I swear I do."

"Oh, Frank, you must be joking."

"No, I never joke on serious questions. This is one."

"Did you come to Jefferson City on no other business?"

"No, I had no other," said Frank, "unless it be to get at some other of Jesse's murderers, should they be in town."

"You wish to take them all in?"

"The last one. Are you a member of this bob-tailed term of Legislature?"

"Yes."

"Ay, then you may do me a service?"

"I will if I can, Frank."

"That's all I ask."

"What are your plans in regard to the matter?"

"Not fully laid," said Frank. "Do not betray my secret. You may see me again, but if you hear of some big man dying by violence, do not give me away. Good-bye."

Then, walking rapidly on, Frank disappeared.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE RESOLUTION FAILS.

FRANK JAMES was in both the House and Senate the next day. There was the usual amount of committee-appointing and speech-making.

More than one, ay, more than ten of the honorable body in the House of Representatives knew the bold highwayman.

In the Senate he had fewer acquaintances, but there was no danger of those who knew him betraying him to the officers of the law.

The sergeant-at-arms did not dream that the tall, grave-looking man in dark frock-coat, high hat and dark-blue pantaloons was the notorious train-robber.

"Frank," said a member of the Legislature on the second day of the "bob-tailed" session, "I did not dream you would dare come here."

"I will dare do anything," the bandit replied.

"But you have certainly not counted the danger?"

"I have."

"Suppose you should be discovered?"

"There would be a few dead men, that's all."

"Well, you would be sure to be killed or captured."

"I might, but my enemies would suffer themselves first."

"I tremble for you, Frank."

"You need not unless some of my friends be-

tray me. They may do so. Bob Ford betrayed Jesse, but I shall not put myself so completely in the power of any one as Jesse did."

"You are wise, Frank, in that," said the honorable legislator. "Jesse was too confiding. I frequently told him so."

"Will your honorable body endorse the governor?"

"No!" cried the legislator, with a look of contempt. "What! we endorse wholesale murder? Do you know Speaker Bashaw?"

"No."

"He's firm as a rock. He holds such a proposition out of order."

"Good."

"And the only way to overrule him will be to appeal to the house. When that is done Jesse James has three to one against Tom Crittenden."

Our readers who do not understand Missouri politics and Missouri legislatures will be astonished to know that the representative men of the great Democratic party, in that great State, would endorse a highway robber and the murderer of hundreds against the lawful Governor of the State. That governor was also a member of their party, but not of what is called the Bourbon or State's Rights type.

Thomas Jefferson would blush to-day were he in the land of the living, and knew that the leading element in the grand old party of which he was the founder, in one State of the Union fostered outlawry.

In after years, when men's eyes become opened to the enormous crime of endorsing outlawry, the fact will be denied. But it will only require the records of the house journals and a few back files of leading Democratic papers to prove it.

Men who can foster hate in their bosoms so long and so bitter that a serpent is more acceptable than bread, must inevitably come to ruin.

Frank James was the most busy of all the lobbyists in the Legislature.

He had much to do. To defeat the resolution endorsing the act of Gov. Crittenden in the manner of killing Jesse James, would be to defeat the governor for United States Senator, for which position he was a probable candidate.

If Frank failed in his assassination he determined not to fail in his political destruction.

He soon ascertained that his friends were in a large majority.

Several days passed, and the special session dragged slowly on.

There seemed no prospect, or, at least, but little prospect, of an immediate adjournment. Ambitious men had districts fixed up to suit their views, to send special favorites to Congress. But, unfortunately for their plans, there were other ambitious men with ambitious friends, who were trying to fix it up in an entirely different plan.

When they came to compare ideas, the whole map looked like a straw fence in a whirlwind.

"When do you think the resolution will come up?" Frank James asked of a member, one night in their room.

"It is liable to come up at any moment," was the answer.

"Do you think it will come up to-morrow?"

"As likely as not. I have been informed it is prepared."

Frank's plans were deep. It would not do to assassinate the governor until the resolution had been passed upon. He wished not only to take his life, but blacken his name.

To fail to have an indorsement of an act so noted as the killing of Jesse James by a hired detective, was an act in which, if he was not endorsed, the public would condemn him, and his name would go down to posterity with a blight on it.

If he should be shot before the resolution passed, a sympathy might set in his favor.

The next day Frank James was in the lobby as usual, watching the proceedings of the sleepy-looking House of Representatives.

Some were dozing in their seats, others tossing paper balls across at each other, and some telling anecdotes.

Friday, the fifth of May, had been set for adjournment, and some were writing letters home to their families.

Frank James was watching with an eager anxiety. The roll had just been called, and the house was well represented.

Every member was afraid some other members were trying to set up a job in the James Boys' business.

Suddenly a member of the house arose. He was a Democrat of the loyal Crittenden stripe, and as antagonistic to the Bourbon element as he was to the Republican side of the house.

"Mr. Speaker!"

Being recognized by the Speaker, he announced that he had a resolution to offer.

A page came and took the written document to the clerk, who read it.

It was a resolution endorsing the act of Gov. Crittenden in the death of Jesse James.

"The gentleman's resolution is out of order," said the Speaker, firmly.

A wild thunder of applause shook the building.

"Glory, hallelujah!" cried Frank James.

The abashed Democrats sat down.

But a Republican member of the house arose and offered in substance the same resolution.

It of course was declared out of order.

"I will put you on record then as a party," said the Republican member, and he appealed to the house.

Then came fiery speeches, in which the cruel murders and robberies from Lawrence and Centralia to the the death of Westfall were depicted by the Republicans.

Frank James sat breathing hard, gnashing his teeth like an enraged tiger, and wishing to send a bullet through the heart of the Speaker.

The vote came at last. The Republicans and eight Democrats voting the resolution in order, and the Democrats voting it out of order.

The resolution was defeated, and another thunder of applause shook the house to its very center.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE GOVERNOR IN DANGER.

"Is the governor in?"

It was night, and a tall, gentlemanly-looking man, in dark clothes and short-cropped beard stood in the door.

"I suppose he is," said the porter, who stood in the hall-door.

"Can I see him?"

"The governor?"

"To be sure!"

"When?"

"At once."

"Well, I think it rather doubtful; the governor is busy to-night."

"But I must see him," said the gentleman; "my business is urgent."

"I guess you will have to wait until to-morrow," the servant said.

"Well, but I cannot; I must leave the city to-night," said the tall gentleman, tapping the toe of his right boot with the gold-headed cane he carried in his right hand.

"I can see if he will admit a visitor; but I think it quite useless," said the servant, starting away from the door to ascend to the library, in which the governor was sitting.



"Aha! I will succeed yet," said Frank James to himself, for the tall stranger was he. "To-night, the principal and chief instigator of Jesse James' death will have paid the forfeit with his own life! I will drive my knife or bullet through his heart to-night!"

While he stood thus, plotting and meditating, a guard about the governor's mansion approached him.

"What do you want, sir?" he asked.

"To see the governor. My business is not with you, impudence," answered Frank James.

"Yes, but you are violating our rules."

"I have nothing to do with your rules."

"You have."

"No, I have not."

"I say you have."

"How?"

"By entering the governor's premises against our orders, and without our knowledge."

"I care nothing what orders you may issue; my business is with Gov. Crittenden."

"How did you come in?"

"Walked in."

"But we did not see you."

"I was not careful about making myself known to you."

"But you disobeyed our orders."

"I care nothing for your orders. My business is with the governor."

"Our orders are the governor's orders."

"Well, I am his guest, and unless you leave me instantly I will report that you slept at your post until persons could enter the premises."

At this moment two or three members of the Legislature entered the gate in front of the mansion, and Frank James followed on in after them.

Going to the reception-room, he threw his hat upon a table, and took up a newspaper.

It contained some groundless rumors about himself, and he could but smile as he read them.

"It is strange how wide of the mark some newspaper men can get," said Frank, as he read the account.

They were certainly wide of the mark.

Some three or four gentlemen were in the room waiting to see the governor.

It was the day on which the Crittenden resolution failed, and there was considerable comment on it.

It was late that evening before the statesmen retired.

Gov. Crittenden was alone.

Frank James was in the mansion.

But, lo! a change had come over him.

He was no longer a well-dressed man, but if such a thing were possible to believe, he wore the hall servant's clothes, and looked so much like him that it required a close look to determine whether he was or not.

What had become of the servant who Frank so much resembled no one could tell, and how the transformation came about would be a mystery.

One of the guard coming along about eleven o'clock saw the servant, as he was supposed to be, walking along the corridors in a peculiar manner.

"John, what are you doing?" the guard asked.

There was no reply.

"Are you dumb or drunk? Now, fellow, you'll give some answer!" cried the guard, advancing toward the disguised outlaw.

Seizing Frank James by the shoulder, he was about to give him a sound shaking, when suddenly the pretended servant turned upon him, and thrust the muzzle of a cocked revolver in his face.

"What does this mean?" demanded the guard, in a hoarse whisper.

"Speak or move without my bidding, and you

are a dead man," was the answer, in a low but firm voice.

"I won't; take it away."

"Not yet. I want something out of you."

"Me?"

"Yes."

"What?"

"Which is the governor's bedroom?"

"Bedroom! You don't want him to-night?"

"I do."

"Wait till morning."

"Will you tell me at once, or will I be compelled to scatter your brains over the hall carpet?"

"Oh, dear me! oh, Lordy!" groaned the guard, as Frank's grip around his throat tightened, and as he pressed the muzzle of his pistol close against his forehead. "I must—I really must?"

"You must or die!"

"Then I will."

"A very sensible conclusion."

"Better let me take you to it."

"No; on which flight of stairs can it be found?"

"The next."

"Above?"

"Yes."

"What door?"

The poor fellow, chattering with fear, proceeded to give as minute a description of the door of room in which his Excellency, Gov. Crittenden, could be found as it was possible to give.

"I think I now understand you," said Frank.

"Then may I go?"

"No, not yet, my dear. You have a friend down here in the coal cellar who is very lonesome. You must keep him company."

So saying, he ordered the fellow to turn about and walk down to the floor below.

Gov. Crittenden, in the meanwhile, was buried in a deep sleep, little dreaming of danger to himself.

True, he had brought a few guards about the capital, but it was only done at the urgent request of many of his friends, who feared Frank James would undertake his assassination.

The governor was brave, and even reckless.

"Now, sir," said Frank James, when they had reached the floor above the coal cellar, "how many guards has red-handed Tom got about him?"

"Who do you mean by red-handed Tom?"

"Crittenden—the governor—to be sure."

"Why do you call him red-handed?"

"Because his hand is red with the blood of one of his own citizens—one whom he paid five thousand dollars to have killed."

"Oh, Lordy! I understand——"

"No, you don't."

"I do; you are——" the man began, while his teeth chattered.

"No, I am not. Now answer my question, or I will kill you, sure as you stand here."

The pistol was again placed between the man's eyes.

"Oh, dear, what was it? What was the question?"

"The question was, how many guards are here?"

"About fifteen."

"Besides servants and janitors?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right. I know now how to act," said Frank, and taking out some cords, he bound the guard hand and foot. Then with a handkerchief he gagged him, and raising the door of the coal cellar, kicked him below.

Closing the door, he bolted it and ran up the stairway.

"Crittenden, murderer of my brother, you shall die; die by the assassin's hand, as he did!"

hissed Frank James, as he approached the governor's bedroom door.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### DEATH OF A FALSE FRIEND.

NEVER was a man in more deadly peril than Gov. Crittenden, as Frank James bounded up the stairway toward his bedroom.

He reached it and knocked.

No answer.

Again he knocked.

"Only open the door," the outlaw thought, "and better would it be for you had you admitted a hungry tiger."

No answer yet.

"Can I be mistaken?"

Once more he knocked. Still no answer came.

Frank began to look about. The hall he was in was deserted, and there were several doors like it.

"The scoundrel must have directed me wrong," he said to himself as he glanced.

There was an uproar below. Frank James snatched a pistol from his belt.

Some one was coming up the stairway at a rapid rate.

There was not only one, but two or three.

"Can I be betrayed?" he thought.

The explanation is very simple. The guard last put down in the coal cellar was not long in releasing the servant formerly put down, and then the servant released the guard.

Coming up the stairway they met another guard, and all three ran at full speed toward the governor's door.

By some mistake Frank James had got to the wrong door, and before he could find the right one the guard were upon him.

He placed himself in a dark corner at the head of the stairway, and as the guard rushed past him he slipped down the stairway.

Then out in the yard, and finally to the street, where he made his escape. The servant and guard, fearing discharge, kept the little adventure to themselves.

Frank James paused under some ornamental trees to rest. He had had quite an exciting adventure, and one which had caused considerable exertion on his part.

"The escape was a narrow one for the red-handed governor," he said, bitterly. "If I could only have clutched his throat with my left hand and wielded my knife with my right, for one moment, another would have been added to the list. Jesse would have been nearer avenged."

He did not wait long.

Then starting down the street that led to the river, he paused within a few feet of the packet landing.

A man started up from behind some cotton-bales and said:

"Frank, is that you?"

"Who are you, and why do you want to know?" demanded the highwayman and outlaw.

"I want to know because I may befriend you."

"George, George, I know you now," said Frank James. "Why are you here?"

"Some of the boys told me you had come to the capital."

"How did they find it out?"

"I know not," George Miles answered. "All I know is that they said you had come to the capital, and I thought I might be of some aid to you. Can I be, Frank; I never go back on a pal."

"I do not think you can aid me now, George," Frank James answered.

"I heard a noise up toward the governor's mansion. Can you tell me what it was?"



"Doubtless some of bloody Tom's cowardly guard took a scare."

George Miles noticed a coolness on the part of Frank James.

He could not understand it. He did not dream that Frank had suspicions of his infidelity toward the James Boys, or that they knew he had been one of the mystic band which had tracked Jesse James, the Bandit King of America, to his death.

"How long have you been here, Frank?"

"Over a week."

"When are you going away?"

"Do not know."

"Are you through with your business here?"

"Yes."

"Why not go with me, Frank?"

"When will you leave?"

"In the morning."

"I thought I would go now?" said Frank James.

"How will you go?"

"In that skiff," he said, pointing to a small row-boat near by.

"Can you wait on me an hour?"

"Yes."

"Where will you wait?"

"Right here. I am a little tired," said Frank James, "and will lie down on a cotton bale."

"All right, you wait, Frank, and I will return in an hour."

George Miles then started up the hill toward a house, as he claimed, to get his valise.

He reached a small, out-of-the-way hotel, and there found three men waiting for some one.

A rather curious proceeding followed.

"Have you succeeded?" asked one, whose voice, if we are not much mistaken, is that of the detective John Burns.

"I have," George answered.

"Ha! is he here?"

"He is."

"Do you mean to say that Frank James, the notorious bandit, is in the capital of Missouri?"

"I would swear to it, for I have seen him with my own eyes, heard him with my own ears, and felt him with my own hands."

"Well, well," said the detective, "that's luck sure. Since he escaped us in the forest after killing two of my men, I have never heard of him."

"He is here in town."

"At what place?"

"On the levee."

"How long will he wait there?"

"Until my return."

"All right, then. We will go in your place," said the detective with a laugh. "Gov. Crittenden will only be too glad to pay five thousand for his capture."

"Five thousand is a small amount," said one man, "when we come to consider the vast amount of harm a man like Frank James may do. Well, well, he'll be safe in jail or a corpse before morning."

They did not know that Frank James was standing at the window, hearing every word they said, but he was.

Frank had grown suspicious of everybody.

No sooner had Miles left him than he followed close in his track. As the fellow entered the house he kept his eye closely on him, and crept up to a side window, where he could see and hear all that was said.

George Miles informed then that Frank James was down on the levee among some cotton bales, and the three detectives left the house to find him.

"I wonder how they'll succeed?" said the cow-

ardly Miles, as he strolled out in the front yard, his hands in his pockets.

When the three detectives left the house they passed within five feet of where Frank James lay concealed.

"I guess I'll go down to the levee and see if I can see the fun. I need not get in the way, and Frank'll never know I had any hand in it. Don't believe they can take him."

As George Miles started for the levee he passed Frank James so near that their coats brushed.

Frank started up from his place of concealment and followed noiselessly along after the traitor.

The river was reached, and Miles stepped out on the abutment of an old pier.

"I wonder why they don't take him," he said, as he stood with his elbows resting on a large holst, to which steamers fastened their cables.

He was on the very edge of the abutment, and so low that he reasoned that any random bullets which might be fired in a fight would miss him.

"I wonder why they don't scare him up. Can it be the fellow has given 'em the slip? Then I'll lose my five hundred for the information."

At this time Frank James was not ten paces away in the darkness.

He raised his slender rifled pistol and took a sure aim through the darkness at the side of his would-be assassin's head.

Crack! rang out the sharp report on the night air.

A moment only the trembling, uplifted hands were above the head of Frank James' second victim, and then there was a plunge, and the cold waters closed over the stark form forever.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

MEETING JESSE'S WIFE—THE GANG OF AVENGERS.

"WHAT was that?" cried Burns, the detective, as the pistol shot rang out on the earth.

"I do not know," King Wilson answered.

"Let us go and see," said Nathan Miles, the third detective.

The three started on a run toward the spot from where the shot had been fired.

When they reached the pier they heard the sound of feet ascending the hill.

"Halt!" cried Burns.

The footsteps seemed to increase their speed.

"Halt, or we will fire!" roared the detective.

The three detectives were running up the hill after the fleeing man.

He did not seem to show any disposition of stopping, and becoming convinced that the fleeing man was Frank James, the chief of detectives ordered:

"Fire!"

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

The three pistol shots in one volley rattled out on the night air, awaking the sleepy policemen from their snug quarters.

Whiz!

Zip!

Whack! went the three bullets about Frank's ears, one of them striking a stone-wall near where our fugitive was running.

Frank ran down one street, as they turned up another.

He was closely pursued.

Frank was lame, as the reader already knows, and was no match in speed for the three men after him.

He seldom attempted flight save on horseback, since he was wounded on that fatal Northfield, Minnesota, expedition.

As he was almost on the eve of turning upon his pursuers and giving them battle, he heard the clatter of hoofs in front of him.

"Who could it be?"

On he ran, determined to meet friend or foe.

His experienced ear told him there were two horses, but his eye said there was but one rider.

Down the street they came, one rider and two steeds.

A shrill, peculiar whistle sounded on the night air, such as but one living man could give.

"I know him now," cried Frank, joyfully; "I am saved."

He was.

The strange horseman was none other than the mysterious Ike.

"Ike, I am glad to have met you. I am hard pressed. And, bless me, you have Siroc with you!"

Ike made no reply, but tossed the rein to Frank.

In a moment Frank James vaulted in the saddle.

"Good-bye, Ike," he said.

The mysterious man only waved adieu and disappeared as strangely as if he had sunk into the earth.

Ike had gone to the stable, found Siroc, and brought him to Frank, just at the moment the bandit needed the horse most.

The police were at last aroused, and after searching in vain with the detectives for the strange man, they swore that Burns and his crowd were drunk, hunted up their sleeping quarters and once more retired to rest.

Frank James easily escaped from Jefferson City.

Crittenden's assassination was only defeated, not abandoned. There were others to dispose of.

Frank concluded he had just as well ride down to Kansas City, go over to Cracker Neck and kill Allen Dillon and Sam Long, two main witnesses in some of the cases, and who had worked up Jesse's death.

A ride from Jefferson City to Kansas City was nothing extraordinary for such a veteran roadster as Siroc.

The horse which had carried Jesse James from Minnesota to Texas, on a chase through fire and leaded hail, could not fail to carry his brother Frank to Kansas City.

The journey was made in a few hours, with one short halt to feed and rest.

Kansas City was reached at dark, and he proceeded from there to Kearney.

Frank paused to see his mother, and learned that Zerelda, Jesse's wife, had gone to St. Joseph to settle up some matters there.

Frank went to his father-in-law's, Major Ralston's, where he found his wife and children.

He allowed himself but a few hours' rest, and then leaving Siroc for the little son of Jesse James, he mounted his own horse, and, disguised as a herder, rode back to Kansas City.

Zerelda James was to meet him there a week from the day he arrived. Frank left his horse with his friend, and took a train for Council Bluffs, Iowa.

There he met some men who had promised to become members of his avengers.

Some of them had known and loved Jesse, and were true blue Missouri guerrillas, while a few were from the western mountain, outlaws whom Frank had recruited to the band.

They returned with Frank to Kansas City.

On his way back, Frank learned that Bob and Charley Ford had pleaded guilty to murder, and had been pardoned.

His rage knew no bounds. He stopped over two days in St. Joseph trying to get a chance to kill them, but they were removed before an opportunity offered itself.

The mysterious Ike at last warned him that he should get away from St. Joseph, as there were rumors afloat of his presence there.



Thanking Ike, Frank and four of his men took the train on the Kansas side, and ran down to Kansas City.

Frank was seen and recognized by some one in Atchison.

When he reached Kansas City he went at once to the hotel, where he expected to meet Zerelda James, his brother's wife.

She was in her waiting-room, and looking pale and haggard from her recent suffering and horror.

"Oh, Frank, brother!" she said, "have you yet begun the work?"

"I have," he answered.

"Thank—oh, thank you! It will remove a load from my heart to know that my husband's death is to be avenged!"

"Two have already bitten the dust who were instrumental in it," said Frank.

"But the Fords and Gov. Crittenden are yet alive."

"They are, Zerelda, but their time will come. Their hours are short. I met Mat Collins, but she escaped me through the stupidity of an old fool of a farmer!"

Frank then narrated to Mrs. James how he had failed in his attempt to kill the woman.

He told how, at the risk of his own life, in Kansas City, he had killed John Small.

"But Crittenden—have you made no effort on his life?"

"I have."

"And failed?"

"Yes, for the present, but I will yet turn defeat into victory, have no fears."

"Oh, I hope you may."

Frank then narrated his adventures in the governor's mansion.

For some time they remained in the room conversing on various plans of vengeance.

"Be careful to say nothing, Zerelda, to indicate our plans," he said. "The newspapers seem to read our very thoughts out to the gaping millions."

"They are filled with falsehoods," said the woman. "They claim to have interviews with me, and I would never be interviewed by them. Where are you going now, brother Frank?"

"To Cracker Neck," he answered.

"Are there some there who were engaged in my dear Jesse's murder?"

"Yes, there are Allen Dillon and Tom Long at Cracker Neck, whom I intend to kill."

The words were spoken coolly and candidly. The woman did not shudder, and the plotters separated.

The next day a Chicago paper contained the following account of Frank James' designs of vengeance:

#### AVENGING JESSE JAMES.

FRANK JAMES ORGANIZING A GANG OF DESPERADOES WITH MURDEROUS INTENT.

ATCHISON, Kan., April 17.—Your correspondent has come into the knowledge of facts which positively establish the theory that Frank James is at the head of a movement which has for its aim the extermination of all whose names are associated with the death of his brother Jesse. Frank passed through Atchison on Friday, going south-west, having four people with him. On the same day Mrs. Jesse James went to Kansas City.

Yesterday Frank returned from a mysterious visit, followed by the same pals. My informant states that the gang of which Frank James will now take the lead is taken from that section of the country in the Missouri bottoms opposite here which produced Polk Wells, Bill Norris, Jim Dougherty, John Pomfrey, and many others,

composed of the same class and material, having for its purpose the avenging of the death of Jesse James and other lawless deeds. To this gang will be added a few tried mountain outlaws whom Frank James picked up during a residence of some time in New Mexico on a small sheep ranch.

Robert and Charles Ford are never to enjoy a moment's peace, no matter what the advice or assurance from Gov. Crittenden. These brothers begin where Jesse James left off. They will be hunted and hounded as persistently as he was. Were the reward they are supposed to obtain twenty times \$50,000, it will not purchase one day's rest, one peaceful meal, or blessed night. These boys are not alone to be removed, but all informants and witnesses in Cracker Neck.

#### CHAPTER XV.

##### CONCLUSION.

FRANK JAMES was in the act of returning to St. Joseph, in hopes of getting a chance shot at Bob Ford, when the Ford Boys were both brought to Kansas City.

The outlaw now found himself baffled in almost every way. The Ford Boys and Dick Little were kept under a close guard, and there was no possible chance of getting a sight of them.

He disguised himself and applied for admission to the jail, but was refused.

No one was admitted who was not well known to the jailer. He then had his most expert man make an effort to get employment as a jail-guard, but this failed.

However, the governor had pardoned the Ford Boys; and they would doubtless soon be free again. If they were only given their liberty, then he could easily slake his thirst for vengeance.

Although pardoned for the killing of Jesse James, Bob Ford was retained for the murder of Wood Hite, and Charley Ford for the Blue Cut train robbery.

These trials Frank knew would be mere farces, and he believed that in case of conviction they would be pardoned for the part they had taken, as they had killed the king of bandits.

"There are two yet at Cracker Neck," said Frank one day to some of his pals; "we must go out there and put an end to their existence. They may read the papers, which seem to contain our very thoughts. We will go there, for they may take fright and run away."

That very morning the papers gave an account of Bob Ford going East to capture some of the gang.

Frank James was chagrined, and for once in his life gave himself up to a fit of rage. How could it have been done without his knowledge?

At the depot station would have been an excellent place to have killed the man who murdered his brother.

But the golden opportunity had been allowed to pass, and he must now make the best he could of the opportunities left him.

He had been in Kansas City three or four days. The Missouri Legislature, after making a bad record in the Jesse James matter, adjourned on Friday, May 5, 1882.

Frank James met one of the members of that honorable body in Kansas City on the sixth, and had a long talk with him, in which he declared it was his intention to kill every man connected with his brother's murder.

The embryo statesman said he could not blame him.

Crittenden was spoken of politically as a dead goose, and all who adhered to his doctrine.

Frank and the honorable member separated, and the next day, Sunday, May 7, 1882, in company with two members of his new band, all

disguised as stock buyers, he started at daylight for Cracker Neck.

The day was dark and gloomy. At daylight rain had fallen, and there was a constant shower and drizzle the remainder of the day.

The men wore large rubber coats, high-top riding boots, and water-proof hats.

When seen one would hardly know whether they were brigands or Western plainsmen.

Beneath those gum coats were pistols that never missed a mark, and each man carried from twelve to twenty-four shots.

The roads were filled with mud and water, which was splashed at almost every step of the horses.

The horsemen were excellently mounted, and thundered along at a rate of speed that was known only to blooded animals.

It was late in the afternoon when the trio drew rein at a log-house in a secluded part of the Cracker Neck neighborhood.

"This is one of them!" said Frank, to a comrade. "You halloo him out; they might know my voice."

"What's his name?" asked the robber.

"Allen Dillon," was the reply.

"Halloo-oo-o!" called the highwayman.

Three times he called, and then the door opened.

A man put out his head and asked what was wanted.

"Does Allen Dillon live here?" the outlaw asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Have him come out here, as I wish to see him on matters of importance," said the outlaw.

The man, who was Allen Dillon himself, put on his coat and came out toward the fence.

But a few paces were taken, and while the little tow-headed girl was watching her father through the window—

Crack! went Frank James' pistol. Mr. Dillon threw up his arms and sank to the ground, shot through the breast.

There were shrieks of terror and grief from within the cottage.

Women and children ran to the fallen man who was struggling in death.

Frank James wheeled his horse about, and the other highwaymen and murderers at his heels fled down the road. Fled from what? Those women and children could not harm them; but the murderer never likes to hear the wail of the widow, or cries of the orphan he has made.

It was nearly dark, and the three marauders were riding through a grand old forest, when they were suddenly confronted by four mounted men, armed.

One had a double-barreled shot-gun and the others revolvers.

"It is they!" cried Frank.

"Who?" asked one of his companions.

"John Burns and two other detectives."

"Who is the fourth?"

"Another man I want to kill, Sam Long."

The two other detectives were King Wilson and Nathan Miles, men who had been after Frank ever since Jesse's death.

They had learned of the death of Dillon, and instantly gave chase.

Frank James and his men turned about on their pursuers, to meet a storm of leaden hail and buckshot.

Bang!

Bang! went both barrels of the shot-gun.

Crack!

Crack!

Crack! went the pistol shots, and one of Frank's companions was killed and the other wounded.



"Forward!" he shouted, taking the rein in his teeth and a pistol in each hand.

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Crack! rang out the pistol shots with such rapidity that one could scarcely count them.

John Burns fell, shot through the head.

King Wilson had a mortal wound in the stomach, and Nathan Miles' horse had fallen upon him, pinning his leg to the earth.

Leaving the two latter to be disposed of by his wounded companion, Frank James pursued the frightened Sam Long, who was now flying for life and yelling "Murder!—murder! Help—help!" at every jump.

Along level road, over hill and dale, past farm-houses, and down lanes for three miles through mud and mire, the pursuer and pursued thundered at the full speed of their horses.

The wild clatter of hoofs, the splash of mud in

every direction, and hard breathing of struggling steeds, alone broke the silence.

The men did not speak.

Darkness had spread her sable mantle over the earth.

Crack!

Crack!

The two shots were fired by Frank James.

"Whoa!" said Sam Long, with a groan.

For a moment he sat swaying in the saddle.

Before he could fall Frank James galloped up to his side, and, in the darkness, placed his pistol to his head and fired.

Sam Long fell dead to the earth.

"Another, Jesse, my murdered brother, you are being avenged," said the avenger, as he wheeled about his horse, and galloped back to where they had had the encounter with the detectives.

The man he had left behind had killed the two who were wounded.

Then Frank took up the body of his slain com-

rade, and, with the man who was wounded, went to the house of a friend.

The dead man was buried, and the wounded man cared for.

Some time during the night the three detectives and Sam Long were buried, and that death struggle is yet a secret which only the old forest knows.

Frank James, the avenger, now found himself, for the present, with nothing more to do.

Mattie Collins had disappeared, Bob Ford had gone East, Dick Little was confined and carefully guarded in jail, Gov. Crittenden kept a small army about him.

He could only bide his time. He swore to avenge his brother, and, unless he is killed, will keep his oath, we fear.

He is waiting yet. Not in one place, but many. From the lakes to the gulf, from ocean to ocean, he keeps up a vigilant watch, and at no distant day we may expect to hear of the assassination of some of the doomed men by FRANK JAMES, THE AVENGER.

[THE END.]

# Frank James' Surrender.

By D. W. STEVENS.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION.

It was a dark night in the year 1881 when two men might have been seen near the town of Cameron, Mo. Both were tall, well-made men, with faces which but for the heavy beards they wore would have shown many scars.

They were riding along a lane toward a grove of trees not far from Cameron, and it was evident from the gait at which they rode that they were in no very particular hurry.

"Well, Frank," said one, the tallest and heaviest of the two, "to-night will at least wipe out the old score of one of them—our enemies—William Westfall, who brought down Pinkerton's gang on our house, tore off mother's arm, and killed Archie, will die, if he is on the train."

The speaker was Jesse James, one of the most terrible of all outlaws known to the world. His companion was his noted brother, Frank.

Frank James was then about thirty-eight years of age. He did not weigh to exceed one hundred and forty-five pounds, and was grave usually and silent.

"This thing must have an end some time, Jesse," he said, gravely. "I know that; our career, so brilliant and long successful, can last but a short time at best."

"Well, we can get even with a few while it's going on," said Jesse.

"Will the boys all understand it?"

"They will."

"And all be on hand?"

"What do you think of those new recruits?"

"Who?"

"The Ford Boys."

"I don't like any new recruits."

"Neither do I; but they seem anxious to force themselves on us."

"It is astonishing how many men are desirous of plunging into a life of outlawry."

For a moment the outlaws rode on in silence; then Jesse, who was usually the most talkative, said:

"Could they all know the heartaches, the woe and the misery attendant upon a life of outlawry, they would not be so anxious to follow. It is terrible! God knows it is terrible! The romance is taken from it by the misery it brings."

When they reached the grove of trees, they found three other men there. They were young-looking men, two of them nothing more than boys.

A whispered consultation ensued.

Jesse James did the principal part of the talking. The Winston and Blue Cut robberies were both under discussion.

Jesse then consulted a moment with Frank.

"I am afraid," he said, "that there are too many boys wanting to go into this. By Heaven! it seems as if all the young America of Missouri was anxious to turn bandits, and go to robbing trains."

"We must be careful, Jess," Frank said.

"I know that; I know we take desperate chances, yet, Frank, when the worst comes, we must cut our way out, as we have done in the past."

"I know," and Frank nodded his head significantly.

"Well, boys," said Jesse, "take the horses to the spot. Jim Cummins, we will leave that all to you. We will board the train at Cameron, and be on hand. Be sure to be ready, for when the bell rings as Winston station is left, you may know we are aboard."

"Yes, sir," said Jim Cummins.

Then the party broke up much as an accidental meeting might. Jim Cummins and the Ford Boys drew their horses around and galloped away toward Winston, while Jesse and Frank rode back toward Cameron.

Both of the bandits were grave and silent. They entered the town, returned the horses they had hired to the livery stable, and went to the hotel.

After supper they strolled about carelessly, their large frock coats and vests concealing the revolvers and belts they wore.

When the train came thundering in they boarded it. On thundered the train. Jesse discovered Dick Little and Miller aboard. The train thundered on until Winston was in view. The whistle sounded. It slowed up.

A few passengers got in, and some got off.

The bell rang. Again the train sped on.

"Now is our time!" shouted a tall man with long, dark whiskers, springing to his feet.

Crack! went a pistol shot.

"Great Heaven!" shrieked half a dozen passengers at once.

"Down, down!" thunders a deep voice.

Crack! Crack!

Bang! Bang! went pistol shots on every side.

"Down, down!" kept shouting the tall man.

"Your money or your lives!"

William Westfall, the conductor, ran in to see what was the matter, when—

Crack! went a shot.

The conductor uttered a shriek, and ran out to the platform. The man with the long linen coat and dark whiskers followed him.

Crack! went another shot.

With a groan the conductor fell dead.

John McCulloch, a brakeman on the same train, happening to not please Jim Cummins, this outlaw shot him dead, and left him weltering in his blood.

The train was robbed, express safes opened, and passengers relieved of all their valuables. While yet the whole country was in a state of intense excitement over the affair, and early in



September of the same year, another daring robbery took place.

This time Blue Cut, on the Chicago & Alton R. R. was the scene.

No lives were taken, but the robbery was so daring, so dangerous to mercantile business, that the world could only wonder.

Crittenden, Governor of Missouri, summoned to him Craig and Timberlake, two men who had the most experience with these Missouri bandits.

"What is to be done?" he asked. "These monsters will ruin our State. We must get rid of them in some way."

He waited for a reply. Timberlake was the first to speak.

"I think, governor, a reward of ten thousand dollars for Frank and Jesse James will get them. Fifty thousand will bring the entire gang."

The governor dismissed his visitors, and said he would consider it, and shortly afterwards issued the following:

#### PROCLAMATION:

#### REWARDS FOR THE ARREST OF EXPRESS AND TRAIN ROBBERS.

STATE OF MISSOURI, }  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT. }

Whereas, it has been made known to me, as the Governor of the State of Missouri, that certain parties, whose names are to me unknown, have confederated and banded themselves together for the purpose of committing robberies and other depredations within this State; and

Whereas, said parties did, on or about the 8th day of October, 1879, stop a train near Glendale, in the County of Jackson, in said State, and with force and violence, take, steal and carry away the money and other express matter being carried thereon; and

Whereas, on the 15th day of July, 1881, said parties and their confederates did stop a train upon the line of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, near Winston, in the County of Daviess, in said State, and, with force and violence, take, steal, and carry away the money and other express matter being carried thereon; and, in perpetration of the robbery last aforesaid, the parties engaged herein did kill and murder one William Westfall, the conductor of the train, together with one John McCulloch, who was at the time in the employ of said company, then on said train; and

Whereas, Frank James and Jesse W. James stand indicted in the circuit court of said Daviess County, for the murder of John W. Sheets, and the parties engaged in the robberies and murders aforesaid have fled from justice, and have absconded and secreted themselves:

Now, therefore, in consideration of the premises, and in lieu of all other rewards heretofore offered for the arrest or conviction of the parties aforesaid, or either of them, by any person or corporation, I, Thomas T. Crittenden, Governor of the State of Missouri, do hereby offer a reward of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the arrest and conviction of each person participating in either of the robberies or murders aforesaid, excepting the said Frank James and Jesse W. James, and for the arrest and delivery of said Frank James and Jesse W. James, and each or either of them to the sheriff of said Daviess County, I hereby offer a reward of five thousand dollars (\$5,000), and for the conviction of either of the parties last aforesaid of participation in either of the murders or robberies above mentioned, I hereby offer a further reward of five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be fixed the great seal of the

State of Missouri. Done at the city of Jefferson, on this 28th day of July, A. D., 1881.

[Seal]

THOS. T. CRITTENDEN.

By the governor:

MICHAEL K. McGRATH,  
Secretary of State.

#### CHAPTER II.

#### KILLING A DETECTIVE.

JESSE JAMES, and his illustrious bandit brother, Frank, were out at their mother's, near Kearney, Mo., when they first saw the governor's proclamation.

Frank was sitting in the front room when John Samuels, a half brother, entered with the mail. Among it was the St. Louis Republican. Almost the first paragraph that met his eye was the reward offered by the governor for the arrest of the James Boys.

Frank read it carefully, without the least indication of emotion. His dark gray eye did not evince any of the anxiety which raged in his breast.

He handed Jesse the paper, merely pointing to the paragraph. Jesse read it with no little interest. He heaved a deep sigh, and returned the paper to his brother. Frank lay down the paper and arose and went out of the house. He walked down toward the stable. Neither said a word, or intimated even by a look the thoughts that were uppermost in their minds. They were afraid of alarming their mother.

Both had the anxieties of the old lady very much at heart.

Jesse arose, folded the paper, and put it in his pocket. Then he went out after his brother. They met at the stables, and sat down upon a log.

"Frank," said Jesse, "that means something."

"It is the beginning of the end," said Frank James, passing his fingers through his burn-sides, which had in them a few streaks of gray.

"I feel that is true."

"Jess!"

"Well?"

"I feel that I will almost be glad when the time comes. I am tired of these endless, eternal chases."

"So am I."

"Oh, my God! if they would only let us come back into the world and live the lives of honorable men, how much better it would be."

"That they will never do," said Jesse, and he gnashed his teeth in rage, which he was unable to control. "Curse them! they want our blood; they will be satisfied with nothing else."

"I know it; I feel it," said Frank.

Then they sat for a long time; Jesse again was first to break the silence.

"Frank!" he said.

"Well?"

"We must say nothing about this in mother's presence."

"No. Poor old mother, she has enough to drive her distracted already. I tell you, Jess, were it not for my family and my poor old mangled mother, I would end all this at once."

"How?"

"How? I would storm the governor's castle; I would seek death, and halt not until I had found it."

"I have had kindred feelings myself, Frank."

"Driven to despair by this constant hounding for blood, I feel that death is preferable."

Jesse James was not a little surprised at the eloquence of his usually silent brother. They sat for several moments silent and pensive when Jesse again spoke.

"Frank!"

"Well?"

"We must not tarry here long. That reward will excite the cupidity of some one. We shall have Pinkerton's blood-hounds upon us in a few days, and then fire and steel will be on every hand."

"We must go."

"We must wander, on, on, and on forever, until we are forced to yield ourselves to the hands of the hangman, or drop dead by some cowardly assassin's bullet."

Mrs. Samuels was not astonished when her two sons came and bid her a hasty adieu. Such things were, in fact, no rare occurrence. She had become accustomed to even sudden flights with ringing shots and clattering hoofs.

Frank and Jesse bade their mother adieu.

Jesse sprang upon the back of his gallant Siroc and thundered away, with Frank at his side.

Both were very much concerned about the proclamation of the governor. It meant business, and, without a doubt, destruction to their once prosperous band.

"Helloa, gentlemen!" said a merry voice, riding up behind them. "Going far on this road?"

"Yes, a little ways," said Jesse.

"Want company?"

"Yes, if it's civil."

"Well, I can't say how civil; but I'll try for once to be."

"Where are you going?"

"Liberty."

"Liberty?"

"Yes."

"Then I guess you are going the wrong way."

"Oh, no; I'm not going to Liberty, I want to go this other way."

"Which other way?"

"The way we are going."

"Well, sir, who are you?"

"John Gosling."

"John Gosling? You had better be called Goose."

"Why?"

"Because you are not shrewd."

"Oh, yes, I'm green."

"You don't think so."

"Yes, I do."

"Well, Mr. Green, where are you from?"

"Up the country."

"What part of it?"

"Oh, up about St. Joe."

"I don't believe it, Mr. Green. I don't believe you ever saw St. Joe."

"Why so? and why do you call me Green? My name is Gosling."

"I don't like to be uncivil," said Jesse, with a peculiar smile on his strange features—a smile that was dangerous. "I don't like to be impolite in any way, but you are lying to me."

The stranger flushed a little and looked annoyed. Jesse seemed not to hesitate to dive down deep into his meaning.

"Now, sir," said the annoyed stranger, biting his lip, "why do you say I lie?"

"Because you are not from St. Joe, but Chicago. I saw you yesterday in Kearney. You're name is Green, and you are a member of Pinkerton's force of Chicago detectives."

"Oh, you are mistaken, said the astonished man, turning pale.

"Hands up, darn you!" cried Jesse, placing a cocked pistol at his side. "I never miss my aim. Hold up, or I will shoot you through without giving you a chance to say your prayers."

The man was taken completely aback, and before he could recover, Frank James slipped up by his side and had taken from his belt a pair of revolvers and a long dirk knife.

Jesse and Frank then bound him to his saddle



and they galloped away into the forest. They panned and Jesse went to a hollow tree, from which he took a spade. Putting it in the hands of the prisoner he commanded him to dig.

The man knew what it meant, and began digging what was to be his own grave. As he stooped to throw out the last shovelful of earth, two pistol shots rang out.

The body was searched, and on it was found the following description of Frank James:

"Age, 39 years; height 5 feet, 8 1-2 inches; weight, about 145 pounds; eyes, seemingly gray and of medium size; eyebrows very heavy; scar over left eye one inch long, running parallel with eye; another scar under it running horizontally under first; hair dark, with a few gray hairs intermixed; usually wears hair short, and side-whiskers extending well to chin, also mustache; whiskers very fine—a great deal more so than an ordinary beard; color of whiskers not quite so dark as hair; has Roman nose; full set of teeth, somewhat colored from use of tobacco; has small bony hand; wears a small ring with diamond set on little finger of left hand; wears a number seven boot; has large ears, standing almost straight out from his head; parts hair on left side, and combs back; intelligent talker; is an inveterate tobacco-chewer, chewing continually in conversation; has small gold watch and chain, with a gold heart on end of chain; wears dark clothes, and always a frock coat; looks to be older than he really is."

### CHAPTER III.

#### A MOONLIGHT FIGHT.

"That's pretty near true," said Jesse to his solemn brother.

Frank, who was an inveterate tobacco-chewer, only worked his jaws more actively on the huge quid he had in his mouth. After a moment's silence he said:

"Yes, Jess, they've got it pretty accurately."

"I feared they would have us both. They have. Every infernal detective in the whole United States will now have descriptions of us."

"We must be going."

"Ay, yes; going, going, going," said Jesse, sadly. "Going, eternally going, until the heart is sick with this endless going."

They mounted their horses, and galloped out of the woods into the road.

True, one more of their dangerous foes had been numbered with the dead. True, they had lessened their enemies by one, but what assurance had they that there were not a dozen more to take his place?

"Jess!" said Frank.

"Well?"

"Do you suppose Gov. Crittenden would extend general amnesty to us if we surrendered?"

"No, not he," said Jesse. "Tom Crittenden wore the wrong color during our late unpleasantness, you know. Were it a West, Cockrell or Hatch we would be safe. But I don't want to trust any one whose clothes were blue."

"I believe it would be better?"

"I don't."

"We are sure to be hunted down in the end, as it is."

"Can't help it! Would rather be shot in my tracks, face to my foe, than die of strangulation from a hangman's rope!"

Frank was silent.

Nature seemed so beautiful, so peaceful and serene, that men should be happy. They passed farm-houses where the farmers were engaged in tilling the soil. They saw peaceful, happy expressions upon their faces, and wished that such was their lot, but it was not to be.

Evening came on. A bright, calm autumn night, with the moon shining serenely from the

heavens. A flood of golden light shed around about them as they galloped along the forest road.

"Halt!" a voice said suddenly out on their right.

Mechanically the hunted men drew rein. It was impossible to tell how many might be before or behind them. The woods might be full, and they hardly knew whether to advance or retreat.

The bandit brothers exchanged glances.

There was little time to consider the question, yet in that one moment their thoughts spoke volumes through the blue and gray orbs seen in the moonlight.

"Advance!" whispered Jesse.

Slowly their horses moved forward.

"Halt!" again cried an unknown voice.

There was no time for hesitation. Frank James was mounted on Jewel Maxey, and Jesse James on Siroc. They plunged their spurs into their horses' flanks.

Two dark objects darted down the road.

Crack!

Crack!

Crack!

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!

Half a hundred guns spoke at once. The very heavens seemed showering down fire, death and ruin on every hand.

Bullets whistled about the heads and bodies of the highwaymen.

It was literally a rain of ruin and death.

"Don't let them by!" thundered a voice so deep and sonorous, so awful that it sounded like a thunderclap on the ears of the men who were trying to escape with their lives. There could be no mistaking that voice. It was Timberlake.

The giant, mounted on a large, powerful white horse, dashed out of the woods directly in front of the bandits.

Wild yells arose on every side.

Men emerged from the woods before and behind them.

Crack!

Crack! to the right of them.

Crack!

Crack! to the left of them, came volleying thunders of pistol shots.

"Halt! surrender, Jesse James! I have sworn to attend your funeral!" cried Timberlake, firing his pistol at Jesse.

"Take that!" cried Jesse.

He shoved his pistol in the face of Timberlake and pulled the trigger. Timberlake, seeing his peril, leaned over in the saddle and caught the hammer of the pistol as it descended, thus saving his life.

The James Boys dashed their horses right against their enemies, riding among them, over them, on them, and away.

The reins in their teeth, a pistol in each hand, they kept up a constant

Crack!

Crack!

Cracking of shots until the woods seemed literally in a blaze.

Down went men and horses right and left.

"Surrender!" shouted Timberlake.

"Never!" cried Jesse.

"Never!" echoed Frank.

"Surrender, for God's sake, and put a stop to this slaughter!"

"Draw off your men and stop it!" shouted Frank James.

"By thunder!" cried one of Timberlake's men, "he's got a charmed life. I've fired at him six times and missed; now I'll try a bit of steel."

He dashed his horse toward Frank James, but the animal had not covered half the distance

when a pistol bullet caught him in the side of the head and he dropped.

He fell, his foot hanging for a moment in the stirrup, while the horse plunged wildly, madly backward upon the other horses and men in the rear.

The dead man's foot became loosened, and the horse shot away.

The fight only lasted an instant.

The James Boys simply dashed through and over the barrier of horsemen, leaving four horses and two men killed, and twice as many wounded.

Timberlake's great white steed, which was the doughty sheriff's pride, was killed and fell upon him.

He roared with rage, and strove in vain to extricate himself from his place of confinement.

The James Boys were two miles away before the bandit hunters had fully recovered from their fright and confusion attendant upon the desperate charge.

"A horse, a horse! has no one a horse?" shouted Timberlake, as he struggled to his feet.

His ankle was sprained, and he was considerably bruised by the fall.

"Here's one," said a man who had a pistol bullet in the arm. "I am disabled, and you can have mine."

By some assistance the sheriff was assisted to mount, but he had not half a dozen men who were willing to follow him.

The James Boys, triumphant in their escape, were a mile away, and riding so fast on their excellent horses that it was not possible for the sheriff and his ill-fated band to catch up with them.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### DEATH OF JESSE JAMES.

AFTER the proclamation from Gov. Crittenden, and the renewed vigor of the officials, it became evident that Frank and Jesse James must separate.

Frank determined to return to his home in Tennessee, where his wife, Annie, and his little boy were, but Jesse declared it as his determination to remain in Missouri.

"Jess, beware of Bob Ford," said Frank, when they parted a few miles below Independence. "Do not trust him; he is treacherous."

"Have no fears, Frank," said Jesse. "I place but little or no confidence in Bob Ford. Charley is as true as a brother, and I would trust my life in his hands, but Bob, I will watch him." The brothers separated to meet no more on earth.

The sequel will show that Jesse James did not keep an eye on Bob Ford as he should have done. Although we have before given an account of Jesse's death at the hands of the Fords, it will not be out of place to give a short synopsis of it here, that the reader may the more fully understand the powerful motives which impelled Frank James, the bandit prince, to surrender to Gov. Crittenden.

Jesse James with his wife and two children had been residing in Kansas City for some time. As matters became pretty warm there, he left, and on the 9th day of November, 1881, moved to St. Joseph, where he rented a neat little cottage in the suburbs of the city.

It was on a slight eminence, and overlooked the principal part of the town.

Here Jesse lived until his death in quiet seclusion. His wife did the marketing and he remained in the house. He had a stable, in which he kept his favorite saddle horse, the noted black, which has carried him so oft from danger. Other horses, thoroughbreds, were in the stable. The house is said to have resembled an armory, containing many of the most improved rifles and pis-



tols, including a repeating Winchester rifle and a needle-gun.

Charles Ford accompanied them to Kansas, and after renting the house from Mrs. Kallten, about Christmas, Jesse James had no other business transactions. He was absent about two weeks, trying to rally the old band and gather them once more into some kind of shape for action. The remainder of the time he spent with his family.

On Sunday, the 2d of April, Robert Ford came to St. Joseph and hunted up his brother and Jesse. He pretended to Jesse that he had been looking after their affairs. John Bugler's trial was in progression, and Jesse had many questions to ask concerning it.

Jesse was laying a plan for the robbery of a bank, and was very glad to have Robert Ford with him.

Jesse said they only needed Frank and Jim Cummins to complete their band for action. Jesse had always been a tyrant, as bandits usually are with their men. He had killed no less than three or four with his own hand; his discipline must be enforced.

Monday morning, April 3, 1882, dawned bright and clear. Jesse James was in good spirits. The day was warm, the first flush of spring had come, with balmy hedges and singing birds.

Charley Ford, as he was called, had been assisting Mrs. James in her culinary affairs. There was not the slightest sign of trouble among any of them. Charles Ford was about twenty-five years of age, and Bob was about twenty. Bob was more of an awkward boy than a man, and would be the last person one would take to be the slayer of a bandit.

"Let's go out and curry the horses," said Jesse to Charles.

As the two were going out of the house, Jesse said it was too warm to wear a coat, and laid his coat on the bed.

Then, as his pistols might attract some attention, he removed them and laid them on the bed. This was a time long looked for by the Ford Boys. The ten thousand dollars was almost in their hands. Jesse's pistols were a Colt's revolver and a Smith & Wesson, both of the very best workmanship.

After currying the horses they returned to the house.

"It's an awful hot day," said Jesse; "I guess I'll leave my pistols off; somebody will see them if I walk in the yard."

He then looked about the room, and seeing a picture on the wall which was somewhat dusty, said:

"I guess I'll help my wife cleaning up a bit."

He picked up a dusting-brush and began dusting it.

In order to do this he placed a chair in front of the picture, the back towards the wall, and got upon the chair.

His back was now to the Ford brothers. They stepped quietly between Jesse and his revolvers. At a motion from Charley each drew a pistol.

Robert Ford was the quicker of the two. In one movement he had the weapon on a level with his eye, the muzzle not more than four feet from the back of the outlaw's head. Even in that motion, quick as thought, there was something which did not escape the ear of the hunted man.

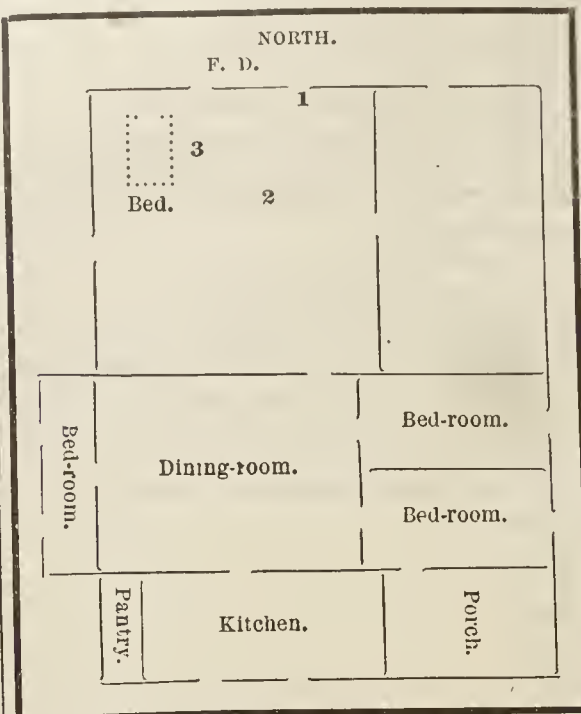
He made a motion as if to ascertain the cause of that suspicious noise, but too late.

A nervous pressure on the trigger, a quick flash, a sharp report, and the well-directed shot crashed through the outlaw's brain.

There was no outcry—just a swaying of the body, and it fell back upon the carpeted floor. The ball having entered the base of the skull, made its way out through the forehead over the

left eye. It had been fired out of a Colt, a forty-five weapon, silver-mounted and pearl-handled, which had been presented by the dead man to his slayer but a few days previous.

The following diagram shows the position of the participant's in the tragedy:



The figure 3 represents Jesse James. The figure 1 stands for Bob Ford, who did the killing, and the figure 2 for Charles Ford, who stood ready to assist.

Mrs. James, who was still busy in the kitchen, was startled by the shot, and, running into the room, saw her husband on the floor. Robert Ford was getting over the fence and Charley stood in the front yard.

"Oh, my God!" she cried, "who has done this? Who has killed my darling? Charley, Charley! come back here; you did this? Oh, why did you kill him?"

The children, now overcome, began to cry. Charley Ford returned, trembling like a leaf, and said:

"No, Mrs. James, I swear to God I never done it! It was Bob."

Mrs. James raised Jesse's head in her arms. He was not dead, and she declared that he knew her, but could not speak.

The blood was streaming from the wound under his left eyebrow, and she tried to wipe it away, but it seemed to the horror-stricken woman to flow faster than she could wipe it off.

"Oh, Jesse, Jesse! speak, for Heaven's sake, speak to me, Jesse! Do you not know it is your wife? Oh, you dear darling, that that wretched coward should kill you! You must not, shall not die!"

She said he tried to speak, but Jesse was evidently unconscious before he touched the floor.

Charley Ford and Bob now left the house again and gave themselves up to the officers of the law.

Mrs. James, who was known as Howard, was called on at once by officers and reporters. The truth was soon known. The Fords declared they were detectives acting under the authority of the officers, which has since been partly confirmed.

Mrs. James telegraphed the sad news to Mrs. Samuels, the mother of her dead husband.

Gov. Crittenden was also telegraphed the news. The country was all excitement from ocean to ocean in less than twelve hours.

Bulletin boards in front of the newspaper offices were crowded with eager crowds to gather the latest news.

Was he, the great bandit, the only man whose hand could stop the iron horse and make the passengers pay toll, dead? He who had made soldier and statesman tremble, who had slain more than two hundred men, who had made

over a hundred widows, hundreds of orphans, was dead, shot down in the prime of life.

The governor telegraphed to have the body guarded, and the men who killed the outlaw protected.

Sheriff Timberlake and Police Commissioner Craig went to St. Joseph.

Mrs. Samuels arrived there on the morning of the fourth of April. The meeting between her and Jesse's wife was quite affecting.

The old lady recognized the murdered man as her son, and gave Dick Little, who was at the inquest, such a torrent of abuse that he trembled before her. She went to the jail and upbraided the Ford Boys for being murderers and traitors.

Mrs. Samuels kept crying:

"Oh, my poor boy—my dear, sainted boy! Oh, God, they have killed him! Thank God! Frank is out of the way; he is dead."

But the next moment she would say:

"Frank is too sharp. He's too quick for them. He don't trust any one like Jesse did. They can't get him."

Bob Ford gave the following account of the killing to a reporter of the Kansas City Times:

"When he started from Kansas City he told Sheriff Timberlake and Captain Craig that they would hear from him within ten days, and he had kept his word. He was not impelled to do the deed from any special hatred of Jesse, but knew that if he did not kill Jesse now, some day Jesse would kill him, as sooner or later it would be known that he it was who first gave away the facts upon which Clarence Hite was arrested. I gave them to Chief of Police Speers in Kansas City first, and then to Captain Craig, who, with Mr. Timberlake, knew all that was going on. For a long time the gang have made our house in Ray County their headquarters, and Jesse and Frank have often been there, and I know them well, as also Dick Little and Wood Hite. They came to the house after the Winston and Blue Cut robberies, and passed up and down to Kansas City, where Jesse James had been living all summer. After the raid into Ray County by Craig's men I went to Kansas City, and opened negotiations for the surrender of Dick Little, and one night had an interview at the St. James Hotel with Gov. Crittenden on the matter. He said he would do all in his power to protect Little if the last named would surrender and assist in the capture of the gang.

"Little afterward surrendered to Sheriff Timberlake and went to Kansas City, where he and I have ever since been acting with the officials. I went with the officers and Dick Little to Tennessee, where Clarence Hite was arrested and came back with them. I was also in the room when Little and Wood Hite had that terrible fight. I don't know whether Little killed Wood or whether I did. After his death, we buried him at night, and Little was lame a long time from the shot he got in the leg.

"Of course I saw a good deal of him, as we slept in Captain Craig's room over the the old National Bank, corner of Fifth and Delaware streets, Kansas City, and at night went out upon the street together.

"The night I came to St. Joseph I went at once to the house where Jesse was living with his wife and children, and found my brother Charley there also. I talked with him a good deal about killing Jesse for the large reward. He agreed to assist me. We waited a long time to catch Jesse without his revolvers, knowing that unless he put them off we could not fetch him. Early this morning we all got up and had breakfast, and Jesse and Charley went out to curry the horses, and came in about nine o'clock. Jesse said it was very hot, and we passed into a bedroom, where Jesse first pulled off his coat and then took off his revolvers. As he did so I got



partially behind him, and as he picked up a brush and started to dust a picture on the wall, I fired one shot, and he fell to the floor. I knew he must be dead, but waited to see if he moved, but he didn't start. This is all I care about telling now."

As the reader is without doubt aware, the Ford Brothers were indicted for murder in the first degree, and pleaded guilty.

Gov. Crittenden pardoned them.

Bob was represented as being full of remorse and chased by imaginary avengers. Others said he contemplated going to college on the money he earned by killing Jesse James.

At the present day newspaper reports are more unreliable than fiction.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE MYSTERIOUS IKE.

NEWSPAPER reporters, as Frank James avers, have prevaricated very much as to where Frank James was at the time of his brother's death. Some have stated that he was one place and some another.

Frank James now declares that he was in the State of Tennessee; but whether he was in Missouri, Tennessee, or Kentucky, there was the following scene:

A lowly cabin, almost a hut in the edge of a forest. It is near night. The sky is cloudless, and the sun just setting in the western horizon, floods the newly-leaved woods with golden light.

This house or cabin, situated apart from the other farms and almost isolated, is surrounded by a fence of poles and rails.

Few persons ever visit it, for it stands off the main thoroughfare. There lives a quiet, unassuming farmer, named B. J. Woodson. His family consists of his wife and one child, a little boy about four years old.

The man has a strange way of disappearing and reappearing without any one knowing from whence he comes or whither he goes.

People who don't know him, don't inquire. Those who recognize in him the terrible bandit, Frank James, are his friends, and say nothing about him. His wife and child seem to be his idols. He is a man inured to hardship, slim, bony, without an ounce of superfluous flesh about him.

His eyes are ever watchful, and he stands leaning against the small gate. He is an inveterate chewer, and now has a huge quid of tobacco between his teeth.

Is it possible that ear, so quick as to have almost superhuman powers, has heard the far-off pistol-shot up in old St. Joe, and the wailings of the widow, orphans and mother whose hearts are made to bleed afresh.

Frank James chews and expectorates freely.

His ear hears something.

It may not be the pistol-shot of Bob Ford, but is beyond a doubt the clatter of horse's hoofs.

As they come down the road towards his hut, his hand seemed to mechanically drop upon his revolver.

A man with a slouched hat drawn down low over his face, which is concealed by a beard, dark, and doubtless false, thunders up towards the cabin.

He is mounted on a coal black steed. There is something so unmistakably natural in the manner of the man, that Frank James mutters: "Ike, Ike! the mysterious Ike again!" and once more folding his hands over the gate-post, leans upon it, for the mysterious Ike to come up to him.

This strange messenger comes on at a rapid gallop in front of the gate.

The sounds of horse's hoofs are heard inside the little cabin, and Annie James came out to the door to see who it was.

"Well?" said Frank, in the calmest, most unconcerned manner.

Ike took from his pocket a folded note, which he handed to Frank James.

The latter took it.

It was a short note from Jesse's wife, announcing the death of her husband.

Frank read it through coolly, without any indication of emotion on his part.

Annie, his wife, came out of the house to the fence.

"What is it, Frank, dear?" she said.

He made no reply, but handed her the note.

"When did this happen, Ike?"

"Yesterday."

"You have ridden ever since?"

"Yes."

"By rail, of course?"

"Part of the way."

"Are you tired?"

"No."

Ike, the man of mystery, spoke solemnly.

Frank James again bowed his head. He bowed as much in perplexity as in grief.

"Ike!" he finally said.

"Well?"

"Is Dick Little in jail?"

"Yes."

"And Jim Cummins?"

"He is in St. Louis, but frightened almost to death. There is no telling where Jim will go."

"Where is Major John N. Edwards?"

"At his home in Sedalia."

"Get down, Ike."

Ike sprang from his steed, and came inside the yard. They sat down upon a log, and Frank James, after a few moments, said:

"Ike, I am very much perplexed."

"What will you do?"

"I do not know yet."

"Will you revenge your brother's death?"

"That would seem most natural."

"Yes."

"But I do not know; I must see John Edwards. He can advise me. We are hunted until I am sick of it. And poor Jess is now gone. My fate will be next."

"Do you want to gather the old band together again, captain?" said Ike.

"No, no; God knows the old band has done enough. It will never halt another train, or dash through a town amid fire and steel, and whistling lead, to plunder a bank; we must let that be a by-gone forever."

"Well, Frank, you know I am ever ready to serve you."

"I know it, Ike," said Frank, sadly.

"What can I do?"

Without noticing the query of the mysterious Ike, Frank said:

"I must see him."

"Who?"

"Edwards."

"John?"

"Yes."

"He's at Sedalia."

"I know."

"Shall I tell him you wish to see him?"

"You may."

"Where will you meet him—at Sedalia?"

"No; it would not do."

"Where, then?"

"St. Louis."

"Very well."

Frank was again silent. Ike was evidently waiting for some order from his acknowledged chief.

"What time, Frank?"

"Two weeks from to-day."

"At what place in the city?"

"The Planters' House; we will be perfectly

safe there," said Frank. "I will be registered under the name of B. J. Thompson."

"I will carry your message faithfully," said Ike.

"Will you not come in the house and wait until morning?" asked Frank, as this mysterious messenger was in the act of once more vaulting in the saddle.

"No, no, thank you," said Ike, "I must be going. I never stop for rest when I have business to perform. You know that I have served you faithfully for the last fifteen years by never being late."

"It is true, Ike, you have served us faithfully, but your work will soon be over. Unless I am very much mistaken, I see the beginning of the end."

"Can you not rally the band and avenge his death?" asked Ike.

"Rally the band? No. The old man who could control those reckless men is gone. The only voice whose commands they would obey has been hushed forever. Ike, do my bidding, and for the present, adieu."

Ike wheeled his coal black steed about and thundered away.

Frank, with his heart overflowing with grief, turned to his wife, saying:

"Oh, my God, that it should come at last! Annie, you need not be alarmed if I should be the next."

FRANK JAMES was one of the most careful men of his own age. He was as cool as Jesse, without possessing any of his recklessness. A man who met with the darling outlaw a short time before his surrender, gives the following account of him:

"He is a surprise in every respect. His voice and pronunciation are decidedly Southern in character, and the 'r' barely recognized in his alphabet. At times in his conversation he is very commonplace, and were only so much to be heard the hearer would be liable to class him among the illiterates. A habit of chewing tobacco, which seems to be very strong with him (he never touches liquor), affect his pronunciation and makes some words difficult to understand. At times, again, he speaks in a really eloquent strain, and expresses thoughts that show him to be a deal of a philosopher. He is evidently thoroughly familiar with Shakespeare, and quotes him freely and aptly, as he also does the Bible. To read his conversation and then to meet him will involve a disappointment, because there is a striking incongruity between the man, his thoughts, his language, and his articulation. That he is a thorough judge of human nature, that he has an immense amount of horse-sense, and that he has during his travels all over the country exercised keen powers of observation are manifest very rapidly. He is not at all demonstrative, and the only things about him that do not appear to be perfectly composed are his brain and his eyes. He heard footsteps and hoof-beats along the road in front of the house before any one else could, and saw every motion made by either of the parties in the room, at the same time carrying on the conversation in an even vein, and as though it were an everyday talk between friends.

"During the evening some of the members of the household passed around the house and stopped for a moment near one of the windows, probably to get something that had been left in the yard. The instant the footsteps halted the eyes of Mr. James were riveted on the window, and he interrupted the story he was telling long enough to request, in a matter-of-fact sort of



way, that his friends turn down the slats more fully. He resumed his recital without a change of countenance, but kept his eyes on the window till the stops moved on, never making reference to them. Whether the man is as hard-hearted as report makes him it is difficult to tell. The longer one converses with him the better is the impression he makes, and the various phases of character which he exhibits are always consistent. That he has nerve to do anything that his mind may prompt it requires but a few moments' study to make clear. The impression of any one who talks with and watches him for an hour is that, however much bad there may be in him, there is also much good. For those who are fond of studying strange characters he is a subject met not more than once in a lifetime.

"The letter he wrote to the governor is written in a plain, easy hand, and the writing would be called good. It bears no resemblance whatever to any of the communications which the governor has received during the past year, purporting to come from the outlaw, but differs very little from a scrap of correspondence which Frank James wrote many years ago, and which was sent to the governor last summer for his use."

The letter above referred to we will give entire a little further on in our narrative of this wonderful man.

His story has been told in such an unconnected way that it is almost impossible to get it straight.

On the day he had advised John Edwards to meet him at St. Louis he was there. Edwards had even remained a steadfast friend of the James family, and not withstanding the amount of dark hints and scathing insinuations, he defended their conduct in public and in private.

He even went so far in his paper as to put forth an editorial in which he frankly declared that he hoped the friends of Jesse James would avenge his death.

The summons to meet Frank in St. Louis was received by Edwards from the faithful Ike. He decided to go, and on the day was in the city.

As the major ascended the broad stone steps at the east side of the Planters' House, he was met by a quiet, well-to-do looking farmer. He was gazing apparently abstractedly down the street, while his active jaws were engaged in masticating a huge quid of tobacco.

"Helloa, Thompson, my friend! How are you?" said Edwards.

Frank James—for the stranger with brown burn-sides, slightly streaked with gray, was he—turned about and said:

"Pretty well, thank you! Did not expect to meet you in the city."

"Brought in cattle?"

"Yes."

"How many?"

"Carload in all."

"Come up to my room," said Major Edwards, "if you have sold, and have nothing else to engage your time and attention."

"I am at liberty for awhile."

The two men turned about and quietly ascended the stairway to the third floor, when the major unlatched the door, and they entered.

Frank James took a seat.

The major then carefully locked the door after them, and drawing up a chair near the prince of bandits, said:

"My good Frank, I pity you; I pity your whole family."

"We can stand it, if they can," was all Frank said.

"But, great Heaven, did ever any one hear of such a horrible outrage in all their lives?"

"It is terrible, John."

"Frank, will you make no effort to avenge it?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Oh, Heaven, John, you cannot imagine how tired I am of this constant flight about over the country. This watching, this expecting every moment to be met by a sheriff with a cocked pistol."

"What do you want?"

"I want rest. Poor Jesse has found what I crave—rest. I long to lie down in green pastures, and by the side of still waters."

"You talk strangely, Frank."

"Then, John, I will be plain; I want to surrender. I first thought of revenge. My blood was hot. I even went to Jefferson City to kill Crittenden, but, thank Heaven, I failed. Now, I want to sue for peace, to surrender and once more become a peaceable, quiet citizen, as I was when a boy."

Edwards reflected a moment, and said he would see what could be done.

#### CHAPTER VII.

##### A NARROW ESCAPE.

"FRANK," said Edwards, finally, raising his head from his deep and painful meditations.

"Well, John?"

"Are you not in danger here?"

"No more than elsewhere. As long as there is a reward of five thousand on my head, I can never be safe."

"Have you ever seen Crittenden?"

"Yes."

"He is in town."

"So I know."

"At this very hotel."

"Yes, I passed him on the stairway a few moments before you came up."

"Have you studied his character?"

"But very little."

"Tom has some weak spots, and if you can get on his blind side you have him sure."

"Unfortunately for me, he seems to have a pair of excellent eyes," said Frank, without the least intended humor.

"Study the man well," said Edwards.

"There may be many things about him which we do not understand. If you contemplate a surrender, you must fully understand your man before you do it."

"I understand all that," answered Frank. "But, John, will you see the governor and have a talk with him? See what he will do. If there is any show whatever of his giving me executive clemency, I will surrender myself to him."

The two men separated.

While Frank James was not naturally nervous, he felt that it was not best for himself and the major to be together too much.

He went out on Fourth street, and wandering down to Chestnut, went up to Fifth street.

He paused a few moments on the corner of Fifth and Chestnut streets. There was a great rush of people on every side. He was in the busiest part of St. Louis.

There were many men in the city who would be anxious to find him. A policeman came along to where he was, and said:

"Move on, sir; move on!"

"Wait until I determine which way to go, will you?" asks Frank, not well pleased at the abrupt manner of the policeman.

"Move on, sir, I say, move on, or, by thunder, I'll take you to the lock-up!"

"I regret very much," said Frank James, as he started away, "that St. Louis cannot find gentlemen to supply her police force."

"None o' yer impudence, sir."

"You'd better attend to your duty as a policeman and not insult citizens," said Frank, whose

ready hand had touched the butt of his revolver. I've a mind to report you."

The policeman, not liking the determined manner of the man, wheeled suddenly about and walked away.

Frank James went down Fifth street to Washington avenue.

It was now nearly dark. Halting in a restaurant he procured his supper, and went out upon the bridge.

It was quite dark by the time he reached the first span. He gazed down into the mighty river, where the water was flowing swiftly and strongly beneath.

How calm and quiet it looked compared to the raging fires within his own breast.

Hundreds of persons were passing by.

They were following peaceful occupations of life. Oh! how much he would give to be permitted to follow some one of their callings; to be permitted to own the name his father had given him, and rear his child in respectability.

The day had been very warm, and Frank, who had never dared remove his coat, as it would have exhibited to the gaze of the public the pistols he carried, had suffered.

There was an iron seat just over the second pier, and he sat down upon this.

The breeze was cool and refreshing, and as it fanned his heated face, seemed to soothe him to sleep. He lay down on the bridge, in the shadow of one of those monster rails which brace it, and was soon in a light slumber.

The constant roar of street cars on the right, and steam cars below him, seemed to lull him to sleep.

It was only when two persons stopped near him and began to talk in whispers that Frank awoke.

He did not start to his feet or utter an outcry, but merely lay perfectly still. His eyes opened, but not another muscle moved, though every sense was alive to what was going on.

"I tell ye he came this way," said a voice in a whisper.

"Do you know him?"

"In course I do. I was with him under Quantrell for three years."

"Are you sure this is the man?"

"I am. I tell ye, Frank James may be able to fool the police and detectives of St. Louis, but he can't me. I've knowed him too long."

Frank James' right hand dropped down to the butt of his pistol. He had made up his mind, from the moment he had determined to surrender, not to shed any more blood, unless it was in actual self-defense.

He did not care so much on his own account as he did for the men he would have to kill.

The announcement of one that he had been a comrade of Frank's during the war filled his heart with sorrow. But they continued to speak, which explained to Frank why his mercenary friend was willing to give him up to his enemies.

"I used to like Frank," he said to the man with him, who held a revolver in his hand. "I like him yet, but when the governor offered ten thousand for him I had to cave in."

"Poor, miserable wretch," thought the outlaw, as he lay upon the iron seat, "I pity you more than blame you."

"Digory," said the companion of Frank's former comrade, "you must be mistaken."

"No, I ain't, Mr. Jones," said Digory. "He's here, sho's you're born, Mr. Jones."

"Well, where?"

"Somewhere on this bridge; I saw him come on."

"Well, he's not been seen to go off."

"Then he's on."



"But we've been from end to end, and not able to find him."

"He's here, Mr. Jones, and one o' Pinkerton's detectives ought to find him."

"Well, one is not able to do it."

"He's hidin'."

"Where?"

"On the bridge."

"There's no place to hide."

"Couldn't he climb down one of these rails below?"

"Not easily."

"Then he's at the other end."

"That may be probable. We will go and see."

The two started on.

"Thank God!" said Frank to himself.

He started up leisurely when they were sufficiently away for him not to be noticed, and went back across the bridge the same way he had come.

He reached Washington avenue, and, hurrying down to the Union depot, purchased a ticket for Kansas City. A train was just ready to start; he boarded it and left.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FRANK JAMES AND HIS WIFE.

WHATEVER Frank James may have been to others, to his wife he was ever kind and affectionate. His courtship and marriage, or what is known of it, may not be uninteresting and out of place here. The author has in his possession a clipping from the Kansas City Times, made six years ago, and only a few months after this strange, romantic marriage.

We give the article here entire, believing it to be a true account as it was published at the time and near the place, where the reporter had ample opportunities for obtaining all the facts.

"All brave men love the women, and in their love seldom hesitate at the means they take to accomplish their ends. The James brothers, who are with the Younger boys creating so much stir just now, have had a love scrape, or at least one of them has. But his love affair is different from all other love affairs. It would not be the work of Frank James if it were not, for their work is so wild, reckless and bold, that people seem to recognize it only by the startling accompaniments and strange surroundings. No one who knows anything of the career of the James brothers would expect them to woo, win and marry like other people. But up to this time no public mention has been made of any love scrape at all on their part. The marriage of Frank James might have remained enshrouded in the private obscurity of every-day country life had it not been for the recent startling raid of the St. Louis and Cincinnati detectives into this vicinity. The visit of the detectives to the house of Mr. Samuel Ralston, about seven miles east of this city, a few nights ago, brought to light the following facts, which throw another gleam of light upon the life and characteristics of one of these notable knights of the road:

"Where and how Frank James became acquainted with Miss Annie Ralston is among the other mysteries of the wild young man's life. She lived with her father, a well-known and respectable farmer, about seven miles from Independence. Frank James had not been a frequent visitor at the house, and had not been on intimate terms with the family, but it appears that a loving courtship had been going on for some time between Miss Annie Ralston and the dashing and daring young Frank James. The parents had not the least idea that their daughter loved and had been won by the bold train-robber, and it was not until several months after her elopement that they realized the true facts in the case.

"Early in the month of July, 1875, Annie

Ralston proposed to her parents a visit to her brother-in-law, Mr. Ezra Hickman, residing in Kansas City. Her parents suspecting nothing wrong, consented, and on the following day she started, with her little trunk and valise well packed, on the train for Kansas City. It transpired afterwards that Frank James was on the train to receive her, and that the elopement had been pre-arranged. She was met at the Kansas City depot by her brother-in-law, Ezra Hickman, who offered to assist her from the train. She laughingly refused assistance, saying that she desired to see a friend inside the car, and would follow him up to the house in a hack. She was seen only one time afterward by her friends, on the train, on the way over to Wyandotte.

"A Mr. Connelly, son of ex-Governor Connelly, of New Mexico, and brother of the young man taken from Ralston's house by the St. Louis detective, saw Miss Ralston on the train and spoke to her. That was the last seen of the romantic girl. She went on westward, and is supposed to have gone direct to the rendezvous of the James brothers, in Kansas, and with them proceeded to Omaha, at least this is the statement of Frank James himself.

"Of course the parents had no idea that Annie had left her home for all time to come. Their surprise may easily be imagined when they received a brief note from her a day or two after her departure for Kansas City, saying:

"DEAR MOTHER,—I am married and am going West.

ANNIE REYNOLDS.

"They knew of no person named Reynolds, and were puzzled to imagine where their girl had met with a person of that name. Mrs. Ralston went to Kansas City soon afterward, heard of a gambler by that name, and received such news as led her to believe her girl had gone off with a gambler. Mr. Ralston wrote to his son, who at once made search in St. Louis without success.

"The other sons were put on the trail. They inquired diligently for their lost sister, and had about given up the search, when one of the boys made a startling discovery by accident. He was in Kansas City when he was accosted by one of the uncles of the James Boys, who inquired whether he was not 'a Ralston.' He replied that he was. 'Well,' said the uncle, 'I am glad to meet you. My nephew, Frank James, has married your sister.' Then the old man recited to the astonished young man the story of the elopement.

"Young Ralston went home and broke the startling news to his father, and advised him to treat the matter philosophically. He said it could not be helped, and the least said about it would be the best. The affair was kept still, and no one outside of a few family friends would have known about it had not the recent train robbery led the detectives to Ralston's house in the hope of finding Frank James there. No word of information concerning the lost girl was heard for nine months or more. About three months ago Mr. Ralston was seated in his yard, reading in the twilight of the sunset, when a horseman rode to the gate, and dismounting from a handsome, chestnut-colored horse, came to the house. It was Frank James, and this was the first and last visit made to the house since the elopement of Miss Annie.

"The interview was brief, and on the part of the father angry and the mother tearful. The father demanded the whereabouts of his daughter. James replied carelessly that Annie was all right. Col. Ralston demanded to see her, to which James answered, 'You cannot see her; she is far away.' In reply to a question as to where they had been married, he said, 'We were married in Omaha, and Annie has got the certificate.' The conversation closed in anger, and

Frank James mounted his horse and galloped away, and was seen no more at Ralston's house afterwards.

"This is the simple story of Frank James' marriage, and why the detectives went and overturned things in the Ralston farm-house. Mr. Ralston has had no connection or communication with the train-robbers whatever. His daughter he has not seen since she left home a year and one month ago. If she is alive she will not write home, lest her letters should guide the officers to her husband's retreat; if she were dead, Frank James would have notified her parents. So they can only rest patiently in the uncertainty of perhaps seeing their daughter again."

Frank James, as his recent history has shown, has not only made a kind husband, but an excellent son-in-law. Annie has been allowed to visit her parents frequently, and, clandestinely, Frank has been there.

After Frank's narrow escape from Detective Jones in St. Louis, he met his wife in Omaha.

"What have you been able to do, my dear?" she asked, with eagerness in her manner, as she clasped her bright little boy to her breast.

"Not much, Annie," he answered. "I have seen John N. Edwards, and he has promised to do all in his power to aid me."

"The papers are full of you."

"Yes, and full of lies!" said Frank. "Had it not been for the accursed papers I would not have been so branded and hounded as an outlaw!"

Annie's bright eyes grew moist and stooped, she kissed the brow of her little boy.

"God have mercy upon him, Frank, and save him from the curse which has followed you!"

"Amen, Annie, and He will! I am growing to have more and more confidence in the goodness and power of God! I am glad now, truly glad, that I did not succeed in my efforts to avenge Jesse's death. Henceforth, instead of being an avenger, I shall be a seeker after peace."

## CHAPTER IX.

### FRANK JAMES AND THE REPORTER.

MONTHS rolled by after the assassination of Jesse James, and the public, which was waiting and expecting some serious outbreak on Frank's part, was disappointed. The public, of course, knew nothing of Frank James' visit to Jefferson City, and how near he came to wreaking vengeance on the chief official of the State.

Other matters came up, and Frank was almost forgotten. Frank then, for some reason not yet known, planned an interview with a reporter of the Missouri Republican. We have not the authority for giving the gentleman's name, but will give the interview in his own language:

A reporter attended in the northwestern part of the State the only political mass-meeting of his life which was not a dreary, boring, soon-to-be-forgotten sort of thing. To gratify the old gentleman who was doing the hospitable he went down and swallowed a pint or two of the decoction of old brass and rusty nails politely called mineral water. They were climbing up the hill again to where they could get some raw meat and other delicacies that distinguish barbecues from other free lunches, and while the reporter was engaged in lying cheerfully, to the effect that he was completely mashed on the beverage, that he would bring his family and stay a month, somebody interrupted with "helloa!" It was an old friend at the top of the hill, and his greeting afforded a welcome diversion. The usual formula of howdy, howyerfokes, imonlyso-so, anythingnewyourway? was quickly gone through with, after which an invitation to go down and get some mineral water was politely



but firmly declined. Then came the inevitable seeyoalater, as the old friend fixed his thirsty eye on the delicious spring below. He had moved about three steps away, when, bless his heart, he halted and turned around. The thought of how near he came to keeping ahead and saying nothing more is good for one headache any time.

"Say," said he, "you're in the newspaper business yet, ain't you?"

"Yes. If I wasn't I wouldn't be here. Guess I'll move on, as they begin speaking soon."

"What paper are you on?"

"The Republican."

"We call it the New Testament out here. Everybody swears by it. Well, say! Hold on." Then he studied awhile and pulled some grass to eat, meanwhile coming back up the hill. "I don't know whether to trust you or not. I could help you to get the stuff for a mighty good piece in the paper if I was sure you wouldn't give me away."

With visions of some new springs that needed a puff, or some sly citizen that was about to make up his mind to startle the county by coming out for justice of the peace, the reporter assured him that he'd be sure to give it away if he got it, and better not trust him.

"No, but honest, now! How would you like to see Frank James?" The last he whispered right deep into an ear.

"After he'd been properly searched and tied up, I'm like to see his pretty well."

"No joking, I mean it." And he looked it,

The interview from that point was intensely earnest in character, and had more the aspect of a conspiracy than a barter.

When it was reported that he would be secured an interview with Frank James within the next five days, if it could possibly be fixed. He was simply to come when sent for, and to ask no questions.

The summons came in time, and the rendezvous was nearly six hundred miles by rail from where the arrangement was made. It was about eight o'clock, and the night was very dark, as the two stumbled along over the mile that lay between the railway station and their destination. They stopped in front of a neat two-story house, with well-kept surroundings. They did not knock, but pushed the front door open and entered a dark hall. If, at this stage of the proceedings, the visitor's vertebral column howled for an overcoat or flat-iron or mustard plaster, and if his teeth began to misbehave and make unseemly noises, it was nobody's business and might have been worse.

Suddenly the guide, having found the knob, pushed open the parlor door and the hall was flooded with light. Sitting directly opposite the door, on the opposite side of the parlor, was Captain Tom Fruchte, of the St. Louis police force, and the newsman was about to advance and give him a gleeful, congratulatory hand-shake, when his friend remarked, after closing the door:

"Mr. James, this is Mr. Blank, of the Missouri Republican."

The man arose, and it was Captain Fruchte no longer—shorter, in fact. He advanced a step and held out his hand, with a smile, as he said, in a voice rather highly keyed:

"I am glad to know you, Mr. Blank."

The searching gaze of the man's glistening eyes, inspired Mr. Blank to remark:

"Here, now! None of that, you know! I'm all right—never gave a man away in my life. Name your conditions and let me out."

By a powerful effort, however, he restrained himself and said nothing of the kind, but went forward to the ordeal of hand shaking. It was a

long, thin, bony hand, but a powerful grip that he found. And then all sat down.

"And so you're the man it's worth fifteen thousand dollars to see?"

"I'm the man, I guess."

"You won't object to my looking at you for a moment or two, will you?"

"No; although I'm not accustomed to having my picture taken." And he smiled good naturedly as he crossed one leg over the other, and submitted to inspection. His surroundings were those of taste and refinement, and his easy bearing showed that he was not accustomed to them. The face was not a handsome one, being too rugged and strongly marked for that. From a pointed, bristled chin that must have been deeply dimpled when they called him Frankie, the strong jaws sloped away at a blunt angle toward ears that were usually wide apart and unusually low down on the side of the head. The ears themselves were prominent, out of all proportion to the rest of his features. The straight lips of a narrow mouth were closely overhung by a very light mustache, which lay so close to the face that in the shadow it was difficult to determine where it merged into the deep facial line that extended outward and downward from either side of the nose. The latter was aquiline, and led up to a pair of straight overhanging brows, that gave a deepset appearance to a pair of rather small, bright, bluish-gray eyes with extraordinary large pupils. The forehead was high, rounded and receding, extending well back on either side of a thin tuft of hair, which formed a dividing line.

About an inch above the eyes, and extending obliquely upward for an inch from the center of the forehead, was a scar. Another was horizontal just over the brow. The hair was lighter than brown, close cut, and so unruly that it infused a sort of earnest, positive, self-asserting aspect into the *tout ensemble* (which seems to be the only polite synonym for "whole bizness"). The cheek bones were so prominent, and the face so devoid of adipose tissue, that the temples and cheeks were hollow. The man wore a plain business suit of the frock type, the pants being of striped goods. From his watch fob dangled a plain gold chain, with locket attached; in his white shirt-front was a modest diamond stud, and on one finger was a plain gold ring. This was the only jewelry visible. His rather small feet were encased in handsome, close-fitting point-toed shoes of soft leather. In height he was exactly five feet, nine inches, and in weight about 140 pounds. His body, of medium frame, was very thin, and the remarkably long and slender hand met a wrist as small as a woman's. Although only thirty-nine years of age, the lines in his face gave him an older look. Taken altogether, his appearance was that of a well-to-do farmer or tradesman; his movements those of self-confidence and deliberation, and his demeanor that of a man taking his ease after a day's walk, save that he seemed especially desirous of having doors, windows and company in full view of him all the time.

Without being able to remember whether any particular feature of Captain Fruchte's corresponded with that of the man before him, the reporter was impressed with a strong resemblance between their faces, which fact is the more striking in view of the world-wide difference in the characters of the two men, the captain being as law-abiding, conscientious and kind-hearted as Frank James is said to be the reverse.

The paramount question of the weather was first discussed, with due regard for the customs of the civilized world, and the preliminaries to easy sailing were rather jerky and awkward. The ice was broken, however, when the reporter

asked, "how long have you been in the State, Mr. James?"

"I arrived here on the evening of September 23."

"Had you been here recently before?"

"No. I have not put a foot in Missouri before since last October."

"Has your present visit any significance?"

"It has. It involves the most important step of my life. Should I be successful in my undertaking it will destroy the source of many a sensational news item."

"Can't you give me some idea of what your purpose is?"

"I suppose I may. You have been vouched for, and the obligations you have already assumed are, you understand, to apply to everything that I may tell you. I have come back to Missouri to try to regain a home and standing among her people. I have been outside of her laws for twenty-one years. I have been hunted like a wild animal from one State to another. I have known no home; I have slept in all sorts of places—here to-day, there to-morrow—I have been charged with nearly every great crime committed in Missouri or her neighboring States; I have been taught to suspect my dearest and nearest friends of treachery; and where is the end to be? I am tired of this life of taut nerves, of night-riding and day-hiding, of constant listening for footfalls, cracking twigs, rustling leaves and creaking doors; tired of seeing Judas on the face of every friend I own—and goodness knows I have none to spare—tired of the saddle, the revolver and the cartridge-belt; tired of the hoofs and horns with which popular belief has equipped me, and I want to see if there is not some way out of it."

"Have you taken any steps at all?"

"I hardly know what to do, or where to appeal. I have written to Gov. Crittenden asking his merciful influence in my behalf, but have as yet received no answer. I don't know either whether he can do anything for me, even if he were willing to. He has relentlessly pursued the men who used to be my comrades until they have all succumbed, and I am the last remnant of a band which ranked as the worst ever known on this continent. Whether he will not be content until he has crushed me, too, I do not know enough about him to guess. If he gives me any ground for hope I will be glad to surrender myself, and to work—oh, so hard! to make amends for the past. If not, I don't know what to do. Of course the world is wide, and I can go where my safety would be absolute, but I have had enough of exile, and I don't want to do that. I think I can give the State a substantial return for what I ask, and I think the dignity of the law would not suffer if I shall prove myself worthy of mercy. But this is all speculation. You understand that unless I shall determine to surrender myself you are not at liberty to so much as mention this interview. I have proved my ability for good citizenship for four years elsewhere, and I think I can demonstrate it in Missouri."

As he spoke the man's face lighted up, his cheeks flushed, and when he had finished he was in quite a glow.

"You retained a copy of your letter to the governor, I suppose?"

"Certainly."

"Don't you think it might have a good effect to give it to the public?"

He thought a moment and then said: "I guess I have nothing to lose by it. I can let you have it, but you must publish it without any reference to where it came from, or to what I have told you."

"When do you expect an answer?" was asked,



after the reporter had glanced over the letter.

"I have no means of judging."

"Will you let me see it when it comes?"

"I have no objection at all, especially if it should contain the glimmer of hope for me."

## CHAPTER X.

FRANK JAMES' LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR.

ABOUT the third day of October, A. D. 1882, Gov. Thomas T. Crittenden received a letter from Frank James. It was not the first by about six bushels, according to the governor's statement, but it was without doubt the first letter from the real Frank James:

"St. Louis, Mo., October 1, 1882.

"HON. T. T. CRITTENDEN, Governor:

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—Time has demonstrated that however carefully I may follow the path of good citizenship, and however successful I may be in gaining the confidence and respect of those who associate with me daily and know my every act, the work of heaping infamy on the name which my children are to bear goes steadily on and on as it began so many years ago. The greater the crime which startles the people of our Western States, the greater the certainty that it will be attributed to my act or instigation. However strange it may seem that a man of the reputation I bear should assume to possess either pride or sensibility, I have the hardihood to lay claim to some degree of both. For years the one desire of my heart is and has been to regain the citizenship which I lost in the dark days when, in Western Missouri, every man's hand was against his neighbor's, and to have an opportunity to prove, by my submission to the most rigorous test, that I am not unworthy of it.

"It would avail me nothing at this day to revert to the circumstances attending my outlawry, which I add thousands of others regarded as extenuating. Those who were where they could observe the events in that little page of history, need no recapitulation of them from me, and those who had no personal knowledge in the premises have been so prejudiced against me by reports of my evil doings that they would naturally give no consideration to facts of that character. The people at large reason, and reason logically, that were there is so much smoke there must be some fire; that although some of the charges made against me may be unjust, all are not without foundation, and that an evasion of the officers of the law is not the course of an innocent man. I bow to this logic and reply that the man who is now making this appeal does not do so from the standpoint of a martyr. He comes to you, their representative, to say that though his suffering has been a hundred times greater than they have a knowledge of, immeasurably greater than the courts which he evaded would have attached to his acts, he recognizes that he has no right to complain of his lot. He comes as a man who, conscious of an honest purpose, asks to be permitted to do what an earnest, law-abiding citizen may to remove from Missouri the odium for which his name is in part responsible. He comes as a man who, outlaw though he is, has for those innocent ones who call him husband and father a love as strong, devoted and deep as are found in men whose lives are blameless before the world, and as one who is anxious to remove from their closet the skeleton which has so long been its hideous occupant.

"If it were not for the fear of responsibility for that which I did not do rather than for that which I did, Gov. Crittenden, you should never have had to put a price upon my head. But an excited and lusty indignant public is not discriminative, and when a man is stripped of the safeguard of presumptive innocence with which

the law virtually surrounds him, as I would be, he is put to the dangerous necessity of proving a negative. That fear is still with me, and, as I write, it prompts me to abandon my present purpose, and having for nearly twenty years proved my ability to evade all attempts to capture me, to take my little family and go to some remote section where I can live a quiet life, free from apprehension. That I refuse to obey such an impulse; that I prefer to go back to my boyhood's home and face my disgrace in order to live it down; that I am willing to place myself under surveillance to which no man in Missouri has ever yet been subjected, as must naturally be the case should I return; that I choose this rough course when smoother ones offer, is, I humbly submit, a proof that I am not as bad as I have been pointed out, and that the elements of manhood have not been entirely obliterated from my nature.

"Right terribly, Gov. Crittenden, have the offenses against society which have been charged against the James family been avenged? God knows enough blood has been spilled, enough hearts broken, enough lives blighted. God knows that if it is the purpose of the law to prevent crime by making its punishment awful to contemplate, that purpose has been served in a large degree in those ten years of terror and tragedy. Is its demand for vengeance insatiable? Is "justice tempered with mercy" a mere poetical nothing? Must the great State of Missouri indulge a spirit of revenge until it has secured the last ounce of flesh? Or, laying all considerations of mercy aside, cannot your State—I would to God I could say my State—better afford, now that it has vindicated its laws as no State ever did before, to say to its supplicants: "Yes, come in. We will convert your very notoriety into a powerful instrument of good and order. We will, purely as an unsentimental investment, restore you to citizenship and give you an opportunity to prove your contrition and further purposes. We will call upon you to use your experience and knowledge of wrong-doing in the enforcement of the laws which you have in the past been charged with violating, and when, by years of correct deportment and honest industry, you have won the confidence of all of those who now condemn you, we will point to it all as a proof of our wisdom.

"If I were certain that I would not be made a scapegoat, I would never have troubled you with this petition, but would have long ago faced your courts and met your charges; but, once in the toils, I would have had to accept all the chances, and while none would have been interested in proving my innocence of whatever might be alleged, they might find it to their advantage to assist in convicting me. Put yourself in my place for one moment, and then judge of my course in keeping out of the law's clutches.

"There is one consideration other than already mentioned, which has weighed heavily in favor of my taking my present step. For five months I have been in constant dread that some rash friend of mine or Jesse's, or some silly person seeking notoriety, might carry out the threats of assassination which have been, according to published reports, poured in upon you. Suppose for one moment that that had occurred, is there a man living who would not have held me responsible for it? And yet not only were the threats not mine—as you will discover by comparing them with my writing—but the thought of revenge was never one moment entertained by me.

"I have stated my case, and have, I trust, avoided any savor of mawkishness. I ask if you cannot consistently with your duty give me some hope for amnesty under the condition I have specified. It may strike you that modesty is not

the most prominent characteristic of this request, but it should be remembered that it comes from a man who is still at large, and the uncertainty of whose whereabouts is, although it need not be, the cause of a deal of apprehension. I do not appeal as a man who, having followed the wrong course until his head is whitening and he is tottering on the verge of the grave, is taught repentance by his incapacity for further iniquity, but as one who is yet young and vigorous, and has reasonable ground to believe that there are more years yet left him for active service within the pale of society than those which he has spent outside of it. I submit that it is not an improper question for your consideration, whether it would not be better to have Frank James, a hunter of fugitives than a fugitive? whether Frank James, humbled, repentant and reformed before all the world, will not be an example more fraught with good to the rising generation, than Frank James a mysterious wanderer, or the occupant of a felon's cell or grave?

"This appeal, though anonymous, and possibly without a complete precedent, is not the result of a sudden whim, but is born of a determination which has been forming for years, and which has already stood the test of four years of sober, industrious farm life, as I will have no difficulty in satisfying you. I am prouder of the nerve which has enabled me to take this step in behalf of my better nature than any courageous act of all my past life. I write this letter from St. Louis, and have you, my dear, and let an answer addressed in care of my wife in Independence, Mo., reach me, and I need not say fervently I pray that it will not be the answer of a Nemesis.

"Yours, contritely and hopefully,  
"FRANK JAMES."

After writing the above letter Frank James went to Jackson County and remained in or near Independence, awaiting an answer to his letter.

"The die is cast, my dear," he said to his wife, when the letter had been posted to his excellency. "A few days more will decide whether I have to be a wanderer forever on earth or whether I am to be a respectable citizen. A few days more, my dear, will let us know whether our child is to live in disgrace or be an honorable man."

"Oh, God! grant that Gov. Crittenden's heart may be touched," said Annie James, falling upon her knees and lifting her eyes to Heaven.

"God grant it may!" ejaculated her husband.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE ANSWER.

GOV. CRITTENDEN'S answer to Frank James' letter came soon—perhaps sooner than he had anticipated. As we have a copy of the letter at hand we will give it to the readers of this true narrative.

"STATE OF MISSOURI, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,  
CITY OF JEFFERSON, October 2, 1882."

"FRANK JAMES:

"Sir—Your letter, dated St. Louis, October 1, 1882, has been received, in which you apply to me for an amnesty or a pardon. Under the constitution of this State I cannot grant a pardon, even if inclined to, before conviction of some crime. Whether you can be convicted of any violation of the law it is not for me to say. That the courts of the State will determine in the proper way when you are before them. I think it wise in you to abandon the life you are charged with leading, and in surrendering to the legal authorities of the State or county in which you are located. If innocent of those charges, then you will have an opportunity to prove it to



the world. If guilty, the law dictates the punishment. If you surrender, you, as any other man charged with crime, shall and will have a fair and impartial trial.

"The intelligence and character of the courts of this State are ample guarantees of such a trial without any assurance from me, one not based upon nor governed by the prejudices or the sympathy of the people, but under the judicial forms of just and well established laws. Determined as I am to see the laws enforced against all grades of crime, I am none the less convinced of the importance to society of having every man within the grasp of the law protected in his rights, however lawless he may have been, when he yields voluntarily and submissively to that law, and appeals to it and to me for justice and mercy. You may be innocent, or you may be guilty of all the various crimes charged to you. That the courts will determine, as before said, and after the voice of the court is heard, then, if it becomes necessary, I will decide what my action shall be. Yours truly,

"THOMAS T. CRITTENDEN."

This letter from the governor, although holding out no hope in direct words, yet gave the celebrated outlaw some assurance that the governor would not act the part of Nemesis, but might possibly in the future soften the harshness of the law by the exercise of clemency and, perhaps, unconditional pardon.

That it was not exactly what Frank James and his family desired, will be seen from their own words.

Major Edwards was present when Frank read the letter to his wife. They were then at the house of a friend, not a thousand miles from Independence.

"What will you do?" asked Mrs. James, fixing her eyes anxiously on her dearly beloved husband.

"I will surrender, and run my chances on a pardon or acquittal."

"Oh, Frank, my dear, what a terrible risk you will run!"

"No greater than I have run a thousand times. My life has been full of risks, Annie."

Major Edwards sat silent and thoughtful.

"What do you think of this, major?" asked Mrs. James.

"I can hardly say," the major answered. "Gov. Crittenden's letter is like the man shooting at an object, which in the uncertain twilight he did not know whether it was a deer or a calf. He shot so that he would hit it if a deer, and miss it if a calf. It is not what we wished from the governor, and yet it is far from showing any vindictiveness in its nature."

"Have you had many interviews with him on this subject?" asked Mrs. James, who took upon herself the burden of discussing the serious question.

"Yes, very many."

"How does he talk?"

"Just about the same as he writes."

"Major, what would you advise?"

"I cannot advise," said the major. "Frank must act upon his own judgment. I am his friend, and will do everything in my power to aid him; but his judgment is better than mine."

"My mind is made up," said Frank, "my determination taken."

"What is it, Frank?" asked Mrs. James.

"Surrender."

"God help us!"

"Does your mother know of this?" asked Edwards.

"No."

"Why did you not inform her?"

"That poor old woman has enough now to crush her heart without having premature burdens," said Frank, bowing his hands.

"I see, Frank, that some of the lying papers have said that you and Jesse derived all your devil from your mother. They represent her as an avenging Nemesis," said Major Edwards.

"Yes," said Frank. "I notice that some of the papers had hard words to say about my mother at times, but where is the provocation for it? Has she ever committed any crime except to stand up fiercely in defense of the children that she bore and that she loves, all the better, as mothers will, for their wayward course which has caused her so much misery? Do you suppose for one moment that she approves the course of life that Jesse and I have led? Don't you think that, had she her own way, she would prefer to have had us all these years at home with her, soothing the downward walk of her life and worthy the respect of all men? She is proud, and the more the world condemns those who were once her darlings, and who, up to the time when they said good-bye to her, had done nothing to forfeit her love, the more stubbornly she fights for them. If a stranger were to go to-morrow to our old home, he would get a very unpleasant reception. She would tell him she knew he was a detective, and that he need not come prying around there in the hope of doing for Frank what had been done for Jesse. She would be savage enough. But after all these exhibitions of death, that poor, desolate old woman goes out to the grave of Jesse, and from there to the grave of Archie, who was, when killed by the raid on our house, an unoffending child, and she moistens them with a mother's bitter tears. She turns to her house where John lies with one lung shot away, and ministers to his wants as tenderly as any mother ever did with never a hint of grief. And when the long day is done, she kneels down by her bed, and, holding up the stump of her poor old arm to God, she asks Him in His infinite mercy to spare her from further chastening, and to return to her the one son, who wanders she knows not where. Is there any anything in all this to warrant the belief that she is responsible for our course? I cannot understand how any man who remembers his own mother can feel under the necessity for writing a word of condemnation for this old woman, however bitter may be her expressions. Were she to join the world against her boys, those who now condemn would be just as ready to despise. You remember the passage in Isaiah, which reads: 'Can a woman forget her child, that she could not have compassion on the son of her womb?'"

A silence that was sadness in itself fell on the little group.

The major was the first to speak.

"God knows," he said, "her grief has been all she could endure."

"It seems to me," said Frank, "that the blood-thirsty public should be satisfied. Two of her sons lie in the grave, a third lies dangerously wounded, and a fourth wanders about an outlaw, and does not dare to own the name his parents gave him."

"Such is the result of hatred," said Edwards. "The feeling is an outgrowth of the war."

"God forbid," said Frank, "that there should ever be another civil war, with all its hatred, its evils, and desolation."

Mrs. James sat silently weeping.

She had spoken but little during the conference between her husband and the major. If Frank had made up his mind as to what course he should pursue, it was no use to try to dissuade him.

## CHAPTER XII.

### A NIGHT OF ANXIETY.

"THERE is many a slip twixt the cup and lip," says a wise old saw. It never proved more true than in the case of Frank James' surrender.

The world at large does not know that one of those inquisitive gentlemen, commonly known as detectives, came very near upsetting all the finely arranged plans, even after the receipt of the letter from the governor, and Frank's determination to surrender.

Frank James, although willing to surrender, was determined that no man should ever claim the honor of capturing him.

The moment he was at the door of the governor's mansion, had a detective laid his hand on his shoulder to claim him for his prisoner, Frank would not have hesitated to have shot him dead.

It was part of his pride that he was determined not to be captured.

The house at which he was staying was in the country, and stood off the main road.

The next morning Frank was to take the train for Jefferson City, by way of Sedalia. His tried friend, Major Edwards, was to board the train at Sedalia and accompany him to the capital, and even introduce him to the governor.

The farmer's family was at supper when a peddler came to the house.

Now, ordinarily a peddler is not such a bugbear, but on this special occasion he was certainly a great deal in the way.

It was after dark when he arrived, and he at once expressed a desire to stay all night.

"We cannot keep you," said the farmer, firmly, coming to the door.

The man, who was a large German, had set his pack down upon the ground by the door and wiped his face.

"Oh, sheemany," said the Dutchman, "me walk so very far mit mine goots dot, by sheemany, dot vas too goot deal."

"I can't help it," said the farmer. "I cannot entertain any one here to-night."

"Let me sold you zome o' mine dings."

"No."

"You vants not'ings?"

"Nothing, except for you to go away."

"Oh, yah! vas dot so?"

"Yes, it was."

"Me bay you ef you lets me stay von night."

"No, sir, I cannot," said the farmer. "That is enough for the present. I cannot entertain you--begone!"

At this moment the farmer's wife came to the door, and taking him by the sleeve, drew him back into the house.

The peddler chuckled. He supposed that the wife of the farmer would induce him to purchase some of his goods.

He looked so cunningly at a small white-headed boy and winked, saying: "Py sheemany, I sold dem somedings yet!" that the boy laughed immensely.

But the farmer's wife had no desire to inveigle her husband into a purchase. When she had him out of earshot of the door she whispered:

"Enoch, don't be so harsh on him."

"Why?"

"Frank says you may arouse his suspicions, bo he a detective or a poddler."

"Well, I'll be darned ef I don't feel like I wanted to pound his infernal head."

"Get along smoothly with him if you possibly can."

"I will, but dang him, I am not goin' at slock a time as this to hev a peddler in my house."

"He may be only a peddler."

"But the chances are he's more."

"Jeli, you'll make nothing for Frank by being so savage about it."

"Go up-stairs to where Frank and his wife



are. Tell 'em they are not to show themselves while this cuss is loungin' around."

The farmer went back to the door where the Dutch peddler still stood.

"Can'd I stay?"

"No; my family are sick and we can't keep strangers," said the farmer, but in a tone much milder than his former one.

"Well, den, I told you somedings, miester. Mine pack vas so very large und heafy, couldn't you led me left it stay mit your house until I comes back for him in de mornings?"

"Yes," said the farmer, glad to conciliate matters. "There can be no danger," he thought to himself, "in keeping a harmless pack of goods in the house."

The pack was very large, unusually large for even a walking peddler, but he placed it in the hall with great ease, thanked the farmer, and said he hoped he would not allow it to be injured.

He then went away in the direction of Independence.

"Has he gone?" asked Frank, as soon as the farmer came up the stairway to his room.

"Yes."

"Which direction did he go?"

"Toward Independence."

"Do you think he will come back?"

"Not till morning."

"Did he say he would come back then?"

"Yes, he left his pack here."

Frank James did not altogether like the idea of the peddler leaving the pack at the house.

"What kind of a pack is it?"

"A very large one."

Two hours passed away, and the family were on the eve of retiring for the night when the little white-haired boy came in and announced that the old peddler's pack was alive.

"Alive; you are crazy. Jake," said his father.

"Swear t' God saw it move!"

Frank James concluded that it might pay him to investigate the matter. He arose and went down to where the large package stood in the hall.

Raising his foot he planted his heavy boot-toe against the side of it with all the force he had.

An ill-suppressed "oh!" came from the inside of it.

The next moment Frank had drawn his knife, ripped open the cloth, and jerked from the inside a slender, wiry young man.

The detective expected to be killed, but Frank James had no such ideas. The astonished farmer was requested to bring a supply of rope, which he did, and the young man was bound.

He was then lifted by the outlaw and carried up-stairs to a room.

"Come here, Annie," said Frank James.

She came to his side. Frank placed the detective in a chair and bound him fast. Then giving his wife a revolver, said:

"Annie, sit right in front of this man. Sit there all night until the hands of your watch point to six in the morning, and then release him and let him go. If he attempts to get away or to make any outcry shoot him dead. Now, sir, by the time you are released I will be far enough away so you cannot harm me."

Frank then left the house to take the first train to Jefferson City.

All night long Annie stood guard over the prisoner, and released him precisely at six. He left at once quite crestfallen, and joined his companion, to be informed a few hours later that Frank James had surrendered to Gov. Crittenden and cheated them out of a reward of ten thousand dollars.

There was a pair of detectives felt very blue about that time, and they never told the story of their last adventures with Frank James.

Their names have not yet been given to the public, and as Frank James is magnanimous enough to keep back their secret we shall not "blow on the boys."

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### THE SURRENDER.

ON Wednesday morning, October 4, 1882, Frank James was on his way to Jefferson City. He smiled when he recollected the young detective sitting in his chair, his gentle wife Annie, who would not harm a fly, keeping guard over him.

"This is the last scene in the drama," he said to Major Edwards, who joined him at Sedalia. At noon the spires of the capital were in sight. When the train from the West rolled into the depot at Jefferson City about one o'clock in the morning, there alighted from it two men who, without mounting the depot platform, climbed the hill and walked leisurely southward to the McCarty House. Nobody was in the office when they arrived, but they registered as John Edwards, Sedalia, and B. F. Winfrey, Marshall, Mo. Edwards had always been a stanch friend of the James family, and Frank James had sent him word to Sedalia that if he would join him on the train, and accompany him in his call on the governor, his kindness would be appreciated. The major never was charged with going back on a friend, and he responded to the call right gracefully. When the proprietor of the McCarty House entered the office just as they had finished registering, and was introduced by Major Edwards, whom he knew, to Mr. Winfrey, he considered it an every-day affair. And after expressing his pleasure at meeting Mr. Winfrey, assigned the two to a room on the second floor of the south wing, looking east. About nine o'clock they were bestirring, and putting on their hats, they took in the town, the major, of course, meeting numerous acquaintances in his stroll, and introducing his friend Winfrey. Returning to the hotel, they took dinner, and devoted the afternoon to reading the St. Louis morning papers.

About a quarter before five o'clock, they again emerged, and walking over the capital grounds, climbed the hill and entered the window leading to the private office of Gov. Crittenden. The latter, having a few hours' notice of their coming, naturally felt jubilant over this gratifying culmination of his long fight against the outlaw band, and he had, without indicating what the occasion was, summoned a number of the State officials to be present at the appointed time and witness this historical event. As they arrived one by one he jokingly told them that there was a Christmas box to be opened pretty soon, and he wanted his friends to enjoy it. While waiting he entertained them, just as a sort of side issue, by exhibiting the Frank James letter, which was perused by all with intense interest, and the good penmanship and easy style of which was generally commented upon. While the company was so engaged Major Edwards and his companion walked in and right over to where the governor sat in the midst of the row. The light shone in from the west, and as the outlaw walked in that direction with his hat in his hand the most conspicuous feature about him were his eyes, which seemed unusually dark, and shone like brilliants, and his face, being clean shaven, was unusually pale, but his walk and manner were as easy and natural as though this occasion, which was one of life or death, was nothing unusual for him. The assembled company halted in their laughing and joking merely out of respect to strangers, and when Major Edwards said: Gov. Crittenden, I want to introduce you to my friend, Frank James, a death-like stillness took possession of the room, and the men sat like statues.

Gov. Crittenden arose, and stepping forward shook hands with the visitors. Meanwhile, the spell which had come over the spectators held its sway. After shaking hands the outlaw stepped back two steps and unbuttoned his coat, reached to his waist, and unbuckled a broad belt which had become visible. Giving it a swing he held out the belt heavy with cartridges and made bright by the polished revolver butt.

"Gov. Crittenden," said he, "I want to hand over to you that which no living man, except myself, has been permitted to touch since 1861, and to say that I am your prisoner. I have taken all the cartridges out of the weapon and you can handle it with safety."

The governor reached out and took hold of the weighty gift, remarking smilingly: "Not since 1861?"

Frank James replied: "That remark applies to the revolvers. The cartridge belt has been mine only seventeen years."

Then turning, he looked with perfect composure at all who surrounded him, bowing slightly as Gov. Crittenden remarked: "Gentlemen, this is Frank James."

Being invited to take a seat he did so. The governor went on to say that he had called in a few officials to witness the episode. He need hardly say that he was glad, extremely glad to meet Mr. James.

"Not more glad than I am, Gov. Crittenden," said he.

The spectators had by this time prepared themselves to some extent, and there was a general buzz as they inspected the features and clothing of the famous man.

"When did you come to Missouri, Frank?" asked the governor.

"A week ago last Sunday," said he. "I have come in the hope that you gentlemen will let me prove to you that I am not nearly so bad a man as I have been represented."

Gen. Waddill, who sat only a few feet away, with a pale face and an "Oh, my!" sort of an expression, exclaimed at this juncture: "Why, didn't you sit right opposite me at dinner to-day, and wasn't I introduced to you as Mr. Somebody-or-other?"

"I guess you are right," said Mr. James, and Gen. Waddill remarked:

"Well, I'll be blanked!"

"I've got about a peck of letters purporting to come from you," said the governor.

"And if you will examine them, governor, you will find that none of them are in my writing. That is what has been worrying me all the time. I was afraid somebody might kill you; didn't know but what it might be done by some enemy of yours in Jefferson City, and if that was done, all the friends I have in the world couldn't have convinced anybody that I was not the man who did it."

"I guess that is so," said the governor: "it would be perfectly natural for people to suspect you."

"Well, I am now at your disposal, and you can do with me what you want."

"I had not considered fully what course to take," said the governor.

"Do you know whether there is any indictment against me anywhere?"

"I do not."

It was suggested by somebody that there was one at Independence.

"Have you noticed whether that is true or not?" asked the governor of the prisoner.

"No, I am not quite certain."

"His wife says that there is one," said Major Edwards.

"If that is the case," said Gov. Crittenden, "I will probably send you there. Major, where are you stopping?"



"The McCarty House, governor."

"Well, go back there; I leave Mr. James in your charge, as he has proved he needs no official restraint, and I will communicate with you before the train passes."

"I would suggest, governor, that your private secretary might take the prisoner to Independence," said Major Edwards.

Secretary Farr being questioned, thought he could arrange to go, and he was then instructed to take the prisoner to Independence and deliver him to Sheriff Hope, who was to be notified in advance.

There were a few more casual remarks, and the prisoner and his friend then withdrew. A few of the assembled company then remained to examine the beautiful hair-trigger, 44-caliber Remington and the belt of forty cartridges; but the majority after a brief caucus, in which a highly favorable opinion of the prisoner was unanimously expressed, moved out and scattered the news over town. In fifteen minutes Jefferson City was talking of nothing else, and great crowds were thronging to the McCarty House, whither Mr. Farr had accompanied Mr. James.

It may be stated, as a matter of interest at this point, that the revolver presented was one which Frank James captured from a man who had first shot him through the body with it. He promised when all was over to give its history.

Those who witnessed the surrender were the following: Gov. Crittenden, Secretary Farr, Judge Henry of the Supreme Court, State Auditor Walker, Treasurer Chappell, Gen. Waddill, Major Tates, W. K. Brambury, Deputy Clerk of the Supreme Court; V. M. [unclear] of the register and land office; L. E. Davison of the treasurer's office; John T. Clark of the auditor's office; P. T. Miller of the treasurer's office and several newspaper correspondents.

Within five minutes of the time of the prisoner's arrival at the McCarty House after his surrender, the yard in front and office were thronged with people. The assemblage comprised ladies, doctors, lawyers, tradesmen, laborers and hoodlums. Mr. James retired to his room, which was at once crowded, and such a levee has never been seen as was held there from six to nine o'clock—everybody sought an introduction, and distasteful though the notoriety was to him, he assumed a cheery air and received every one with a good-natured dignity which was the subject of much comment. Several of the callers were acquaintances of his immediate friends or relatives, and with these he discussed family affairs.

A lawyer happened to mention the stubborn Cass County judges who are incarcerated for their contempt of court, and he was at home on that, and discussed their case with a lively interest. In fact, he did most of the talking, and without being flippant he held up his end of the humor. The crowd stood and gaped, and the room heated up to ninety degrees, compelling him to doff his coat. To a query of a new acquaintance as to the condition of his health, he remarked, laughingly:

"They tell me I've got the consumption, but I don't believe it."

When asked if he hadn't been in a number of hot places in his career, he replied that the present was about as hot a place as he had ever been in. His hat was mislaid, and when he asked for it and somebody suggested that it wasn't the first time he had lost his hat, he replied quickly:

"Oh! you're mistaken; I generally carry it in my teeth."

And so he went on, talking sense to those who preferred that kind, and fun to those who wanted it. The crowd stood and gaped.

A sketch of the scene would have been worthy of perpetration. An outlaw, the central figure, sat on a table with coat and hat off, hemmed in

by a mob, which filled the entire room and extended into the hall, sitting on the stairs and bed; near him were the more dignified class of his auditors. In the front row of the standups were a number of boys, including two little darkies, and back of them the crowd was of all sorts, and their faces half in the shadow and half lighted by a lamp located near where he sat. Never was an audience more willing to listen or more appreciative of what was said by their entertainer. He certainly made friends of all who called. It was very difficult to get the people to leave after they had once secured a place whence they could see him; but a couple of gentlemen managed that part of the affair very creditably, and there was an almost steady stream up-stairs and down.

The question of the hour on the street was, "Have you seen him yet?" and he who had not seen this man with seventeen bullet-wounds in his body was an object of pity.

Old Callaway sent over a deputation of her citizens, with whom Mr. James discussed the old times in the kingdom, saying he used to ride through there and knows every foot of her ground. He said he would always feel that he owed her a debt of gratitude on account of the efforts of her representative, Jeff. Jones, in 1867, to secure the passage of the bill granting amnesty to the James Boys, which bill failed of carrying by only two votes.

After all the callers had retired your correspondent had a brief chat with him. He said that the ordeal was not so terrible as it might seem to an onlooker. He said he was now satisfied that he would get the benefit of a fair trial, and if he had only to stand responsible for what could be legally proved against him, he had not much to fear. The very fact that he was willing to take those chances showed, he said, that he did not feel the weight of any very heinous crime.

Among the latter callers were Gov. Crittenden and wife, who, in taking a walk, dropped in for a few moments and had a social chat. The prisoner took a couple of hours' sleep, and about half-past twelve he, with Major Edwards and Fin Farr, went to the depot to take the train for Independence.

Gov. Crittenden was questioned as to what course was to be pursued in the case.

"I have ordered," said he, "that the prisoner be taken to Independence, where an indictment awaits him, and in case he is able to do so, he will doubtless furnish bonds for his appearance. If unable, he will be locked up and held for trial."

"In case he is wanted in other States, will requisitions be honored?"

"The vindications of the laws of our own State is the first thing for me to look to, and so long as he is wanted by our courts he will be detained here."

"What is the charge pending at Independence?"

"I am not fully informed as to that, but think it refers to the Glendale robbery."

"Has the State a strong case?"

"What the strength of its admissible evidence is I cannot say. You will have to see Circuit Attorney Wallace about that."

"What was the date of your proclamation offering \$50,000 reward for the robbers?"

"July 28, 1881."

"It has often been asserted that you offered \$10,000 each for Frank and Jesse James, dead or alive. Is that so?"

"No, sir. Here is the proclamation; see for yourself. No such words appear in it. I would not put forth such a proclamation. It would be a disgrace to the State. I offered \$10,000 each for the brothers—\$5,000 to be paid on arrest and \$5,000 on conviction."

"What have you to say about the surrender?"

"Nothing special. It ends, I think, for all time train-robbing and bank-robbing in Missouri. I am gratified that it is all over, for the work has been long and hard. Too much credit cannot be given to such men as Craig and Timberlake. They have been worth much to Missouri. They are brave, generous men. I should not fail to mention also in this connection Sheriff Casen, of Saline, and all the officers in Jackson County. Judge White, of the criminal court of Jackson County, has done his duty without fear, and with great ability. So has Mr. William Wallace, the prosecuting attorney of that county. What I have done has been in the interest of Missouri solely, seeking her peace and prosperity, and now I trust our State will rejoice and 'blossom as the rose.'"

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### FROM JEFFERSON CITY TO INDEPENDENCE.

At one o'clock on the morning of October 6, 1882, a quartette, consisting of Frank James, Secretary Farr, Major J. N. Edwards and a Republican correspondent, arrived at the Jefferson City depot to take the train for Independence, according to the programme laid down by the governor. Even at that midnight hour quite a large number of people assembled on the platform to get a look at the outlaw.

As the train was two hours late, the party was accommodated with chairs in the restaurant, where they were hemmed in by an assemblage of curious ones. The conversation was commonplace enough, and the outlaw was not betrayed into any of the reminiscences which the crowd hoped to hear. When the train finally arrived it was very much crowded, and notwithstanding the disposition which the conductor manifested to make the distinguished passengers comfortable, he was unable to do more than find them bare sitting room in separate localities for the first two hours.

The several hundred people on the train were ignorant of the character of the new shipment, but about six o'clock, when the train reached Sedalia, the news suddenly began to spread, and immediately a pilgrimage set in from all parts of the train to the car where the party sat. For a little while the correspondent, engrossed in reading a Sedalia morning paper, was unconsciously lionized, and it was not without a considerable degree of perturbation that on looking around he saw some fifty pairs of eyes focussed on him, all expressive of various degrees of awe and admiration. Mr. James sat a few yards away keenly enjoying the situation, and there is no reliable evidence that this was not one more outrage chargeable to his iniquity. It took some time to get the misguided ones to draw a bead on the right target, and no small number of passengers indulged in mirth at the case of mistaken identity. No apologies to make.

Comfort came a half hour after, however, when Farr, who had not been informed of the foregoing, took a seat alongside of the outlaw just in time to be pointed out as the bandit by the waggish conductor, who marshaled in all the ladies from the sleepers, and led them a promenade down the aisle and back. The exclamations of amazement, horror and pity that were lavished on the posing secretary were entirely lost as he, out of regard for the ladies, kept his eyes modestly on the paper, under the belief that his companion was the one who was being transfixed. It was not until the promenade was fully over, that the victim suddenly discovered what the giggling passengers in the surrounding seats had seen from the first, and he did not till the imposition had been fully exposed, after which he kept a lookout for a repetition of that sort of thing. At Sedalia, Warrensburg, Holden, Pleasant



ant Hill and Lee's Summit, the station platforms were crowded with people, who, the farther west they were, manifested the more incredulity in connection with the reported surrender. At Bee's Summit, a small man with a full beard, climbed upon the side of a car, poked his head in the window, looked at the party of four who were now together, and remarked:

"Shoo, I don't believe any such stuff." As his eye rested on Frank, however, he caught his breath, and exclaimed, "but by Jinks, I believe it is!"

Another look; he shook his disengaged hand very abruptly, and said:

"Frank, is it you?"

Frank replied:

"I guess it is," but didn't reach for the hand.

"I don't believe I remember you, though," he said.

"Didn't suppose you would. My name's Wayman. I used to fight with you under Quantrell."

"What! Mat Wayman? Why, how are you?" and they shook hands.

"No, I ain't Mat, but I am Mill. Say, Frank, is Jesse dead sure enough? Oh, ho! he is dead; well, I never expected to see you alive. Frank, shake, old boy," and they shook, the train moving out in the meantime and the little man dangling from the window.

The crowd, who had made their way inside and had taken in the scene and dialogue, scrambled hastily out and reached the platform. At Pleasant Hill a genuine old gray-bearded moss-back, in short pants, "galluses" and a big, wide-brimmed hat, pulled himself up to the window, into which all were looking, exclaiming, between his grunts:

"I seed him nigh about eighteen year ago, and disremember exactly. Yes, Lord! it's him!"

And he too was shied off the side of the car in an earthquake sort of way. At Holden a genial old gentleman, whose geggies enabled him to follow the exact line indicated by the other people's fingers, gazed fiercely at the four visible through the double window, and remarked:

"I don't know which one is him, but they're all a purty likely-looking lot."

The last half of the trip was a silent ovation, and those who lived in that section said that nothing had produced such an excitement throughout the State in years. When the Independence region was reached the outlaw brightened up, and, looking out of the window, pointed to the deep wood and rugged bluffs on either hand, exclaiming:

"I know every foot of this territory, and so well that I can take you to any part in any creek on the darkest night. Over yonder on those hills many a time we watched Ewing's troops maneuvering down in this valley. That culvert down yonder leading under this railroad bed is bigger than it looks, and I have often rode through it on horseback."

He grew enthusiastic as he pointed out this landmark and that, and declared the region to be God's own beautiful country. It was a little after ten o'clock when the train drew up at the Independence platform, which was densely crowded with people and surrounded by vehicles of all descriptions. All sorts of men and women and all sorts of costumes were in the crowd, there being far more than a sprinkling of backwoodsmen.

If anybody believed that Frank James was without friends, a sight of the enthusiastic demonstration that greeted him would quickly have changed that belief. As he stepped down off the car he was met by his wife, his mother, Mrs. Samuels, who had been summoned from Kearney to meet him, and his little four-year-old son, who was a very handsome child. The meeting was a

highly emotional one, and many tears were shed as the old lady embraced him and declared her gratitude to God for restoring him to her. He took the little one in his arms, and with his mother holding on one arm and his wife the other, pushed through the crowd to where a 'bus was waiting to carry the party to the town, a mile away. They drove to the Merchants' Hotel, followed by all sorts of clattering vehicles and by hundreds on foot. The hotel corridors were jammed, and it seemed as though every man knew Frank as intimately as a brother, and he, in turn, knew the nicknames of all. The arms were nearly shaken off him.

Expressions of good wishes were monotonous, and he had great difficulty in reaching a second-floor room, which, for the next two hours, his party used as a reception-room. Samuel Ralston, Frank's father-in-law, and his matronly wife joined them, and the former acted as master of ceremonies, leading squad after squad—squad of old graybeards up the stairs and introducing them to the new arrival. Marshal Cornelius Murphy and Prosecuting-Attorney W. H. Wallace were there with all the rest of the county. While the prisoner held an impromptu levee, Major Edwards interviewed these gentlemen as to what was to be done. It had been supposed that there were indictments for robbery only, and on the supposition Major Edwards had anticipated no difficulty in securing the immediate release of the outlaw on bonds. To that end some of the most prominent men of the country including the chief bankers at Lee's Summit, proffered their service, and, if it would have availed anything, a bond of half a million dollars would have been given on the spot. The faith these men of property manifested in the wayward James was amazing. But an unpleasant surprise awaited Major Edwards.

Mr. Wallace stated that, in the first place, Judge White, who alone had the jurisdiction, and could fix and take bond, was in Kansas City, where he resided. In the next place he (Wallace) had as yet no time to examine the records, and determine what indictments there were against James, but he was certain that one of them was for murder in the first degree, and thought another was for robbery. The charge of murder was not bailable until such time as the judge could summon and examine witnesses, it being his prerogative to take bail after such time, if he regarded the case as not being very strong. Pending this action there was but one thing to do, and that was, to lock the prisoner up in jail. It might take a few days, or it might take, perhaps, weeks to effect a preliminary examination, but there was nothing to do but to lock him up, unless Mr. Farr wished to continue his custodian. Being consulted about it, the prisoner said he was there to submit to the requirements of the law, whatever they might be, and although the charge of murder was frivolous, and took him by surprise, he did not recognize his right to protest.

Mrs. Samuels, of course, was very averse to this proceeding, but she was convinced that there was no other course, and at half-past two o'clock Secretary Farr formally turned the prisoner over to Marshal Murphy to answer such charges as might be brought. The marshal showed a disposition to be as obliging as possible, and he allowed the prisoner to remain for three hours longer at the hotel, conversing with his family and receiving his friends, who comprised the very best men of the place, as well as numbers of the old bush-rangers and guerrillas. A notable caller was a younger brother of the celebrated bandits, Buck Daniels and Thonys Daniels, both of whom met a violent death. About two o'clock the prisoner bade good-bye to his weeping family, and cheerfully follow-

ed the marshal to the jail, where he was incarcerated with a certainty of not having his comfort neglected. The streets, however, were crowded until dusk, as upon a great holiday. Judge White was to be seen without delay and he urged to take steps towards determining what could be done in the matter of bail, let the amount of bond be what it may.

The indictment for murder was based upon the killing of one of Pinkerton's detectives named J. W. Wycher, which occurred in 1874. The story goes that one day Wycher appeared at Liberty, and stated to several that he intended to go out as a farmer into the Kearney region, and to try to capture or kill the boys by securing employment on their farm. He went out in a laborer's costume on the evening after announcing his purpose, but news of his mission had preceded him. Late that night he was taken aboard the ferry at Liberty landing on a horse, to which he was secured by a rope fastened to his ankles, and passing under the horse's belly; he was also gagged. His two captors, whoever they were, gave the ferryman no explanation, but told him to take them over to the Jackson County side. Arriving there, they led the horse up the road, and next morning a farmer found Wycher's body lying by the roadside, about two miles from Independence, riddled with bullets. His name was printed on his arm in India ink. The authorities took no action at the time, but four years later found an indictment against Frank. The outlaw said all that he had to wish for in that case was that the judge would give it even the most salutary examination, as the result must be his loss of bail. The robbery which formed the basis of the indictment in this case was the Glendale robbery which occurred on October 5, 1879, twenty-five miles from here, on the Chicago & Alton road, and which resulted in the loss of seven thousand dollars to the company.

Late that afternoon another fact was discovered, which modified the eagerness of the prisoner's friends to secure his release on bail. The marshal here had in his hands an indictment and warrant charging Frank James with the murder of F. W. Sheets, the cashier of the bank of Gallatin, who was shot and killed in a raid, in which the attacking party showed no desire to carry off any of the money of the bank. In case the prisoner was released, he was to be at once re-arrested and taken to Daviess County, where his friends were very few, and where he would have more difficulty in procuring bail than here. He discussed all of these cases with an easy confidence, saying that if he was tried as a man against whom no crime had ever been established, he was absolutely certain of acquittal every time; but if he was tried as a man who was guilty anyhow, regardless of what may be proven, he would have a hard time. It was the latter sort of trial that he prayed the governor to protect him from. In view of all the circumstances his friends thought it best to let matters take an easy course, and to leave him where he was until the sitting of the Kansas City branch of the criminal court, which took place in November.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CONCLUSION.

In concluding the narrative of the surrender of Frank James it may not be uninteresting to the reader to have some account of his life in and about Nashville, Tenn., where he and his brother Jesse were a good part of their time. We give the following from a Nashville newspaper correspondent:

"NASHVILLE, Oct. 6th.

"Frank James is well remembered in this section, where, under the name of Woodson, in 1879, he lived on Hyde's Ferry Hill, opposite County Court Clerk Eastman. The latter gives



James a high recommendation, and all the neighbors coincide with this opinion. Woodson had a wife and one child, and owned two well-known race-horses, Jim Malone and Jim Scott, which he sold afterwards to Nashville parties. He also owned a team of fine mules, and used to haul lumber for a large manufacturing concern. Mr. Eastman describes Woodson as thin-faced, rather stoop-shouldered, with sandy whiskers and mustache, and apparently forty years old. At the same house lived a man named Howard, who passed as Woodson's brother-in-law.

"This man was afterwards recognized from pictures published as Jesse James. The two were together nearly all the time, and voted for Mr. Eastman for county court clerk. Howard would frequently go away and be absent for days. Dr. W. A. Hamilton, who lives on White Creek, says J. D. Howard and a man named Woodson came into that county in 1879 and rented a farm. He waited on Howard for the first time on the 17th of March of that year. They first came there in a two-horse wagon. After they had remained there for some time Woodson, who was accustomed to swear like a sailor, reformed and joined the Methodist Church. Dr. Hamilton says that the cut of Jesse James, published in Monday morning's American, has a strong resemblance to Howard; that both Howard and Woodson has a strong love for horses, had plenty of money, and seemed very liberal in spending it. Both Howard and Woodson were good farmers, notwithstanding the fact that Howard was absent frequently, as much as three months at a time, and did not seem to do any work whatever.

Howard and Woodson frequently appeared at the various saloons in Nashville and always together. Woodson rarely ever spoke, or tried to say, while Howard spoke occasionally, and even then only when a question was asked. Howard at all times seemed to have control of Woodson, who was said to have been his brother-in-law. When Howard played at faro he had nothing whatever to say, and seemed to be annoyed at any laugh that came up on any point in the game, it appearing that he did not want to have the game delayed. A man supposed to be Frank James was employed on the Hamblin farm about eight miles out on the Gallatin pike. On the morning it was published in the American that Jesse James had been killed, Frank James borrowed some money, saying that he desired to come to Nashville to purchase some clothing.

"He came to Nashville but never returned. He was always very reticent and seemed to be a man of education and was especially fond of reading newspapers. He never sought the acquaintance of any one, and always kept his room after attending to his duties, which was to see after the stock, for which he seemed to have a high appreciation. W. K. Jackson, a prominent merchant at Box Station, Humphreys County, states that Jesse James, under the alias of J. D. Howard, lived at Box for a short while before removing to Edgefield. There was always something mysterious about the man, and he was regarded with suspicion when he first took up his residence at Box. Gradually, however, this suspicion wore off. When he first came there he said he was from Texas. Once Mr. Jackson asked James what part of Texas he was from. James became very angry at this, but afterward told Mr. Jackson the reason he became mad. He said he had formerly lived in Massachusetts. One day a policeman came to him and accused him of robbing a Massachusetts bank. James said, in order to evade arrest, he killed the policeman and fled to Texas. Two or three times in different parts of Texas he felt he was being spotted, and he had to move about a good

deal. For this reason he did not want to say what part of Texas he was from.

"James made frequent trips away from home, sometimes remaining as long as two or three weeks. James desired to buy some furniture, and Jackson wrote him a letter of introduction to Bradford Nichol of this city. James bought furniture to the amount of \$175 and paid cash for it.

"After his removal to Edgefield he frequently came in and bought various articles of kitchen furniture. Nichol still has the letter of introduction written him by Jackson, which was handed him by Jesse James. James generally came back from these trips with large quantities of money. He would explain this by saying he had been successful in stock trading. Once, however, he came back moneyless, and was compelled to borrow money from Jackson. Once he came back, saying he had been to Russellville, Ky. He had a large sum of money with him when he came back. This was about the time the Russellville bank was robbed. A short time before he removed from Box, he became financially embarrassed, and swindled an old farmer out of \$900 worth of stock. He left Box in a country wagon, driven by a pair of handsome horses. After he removed to Nashville, the old man sued James for the recovery of his property. He obtained a judgment, and friends endeavored to secure a compromise at \$300. James agreed to give the amount, but the old farmer said he would take \$900 or nothing.

"James appealed to the Supreme Court, and the case is still there unheard.

"When he left Box he owed nearly every one in the place. He called to see Mr. Jackson, paid him \$60 he owed him and left the same day. Jackson met James in Nashville one day and recognized him. James told many bold stories of his life and was generally regarded as a desperado. He was always armed, and seemed always on his guard against an imaginary enemy. Howard and Woodson moved to Edgefield and located on Boscohel street, in the year 1875.

"While there a child was born to his wife, Dr. W. M. Vertrees being the attending physician. Howard, or Jesse James, claimed to be a wheat speculator. He was frequently away from home for two or three weeks at a time. Mrs. James was always well provided with money, very frequently having as much as \$1,500 in her possession. In a stable attached to the premises were two fine and powerful horses, and these were used by James when he went away from home. The large sums of money seen by the neighbors in the possession of James caused the rumor to go abroad that he was gambling. James, as soon as aware of this report being in circulation, moved from Boscohel street to the Hyde's Ferry pine, about four miles from the city. While living at that point, in November, 1880, Dr. W. C. Cook was called to visit James, who was then sick with malarial fever.

"When he recovered he removed to Mrs. Kent's boarding-house on Summer street. He remained there only a short while, but returned to Edgefield and rented a house No. 903 Woodland street. He lived there as late as February, 1881. In the directory of that year he is set down as "John D. Howard," laborer, house 903 Woodland street. James afterwards moved to Russell street, and while living there Dr. Cook vaccinated the two children. After his removal from Russell street, which was in the fall of 1881, James disappeared. He took up his residence in St. Joseph, Mo., in November, 1881, and probably lived in Nashville until nearly that time. The last seen of James was in October, 1881, when he left the city. He had already removed his family to another place and

returned, remaining about ten days. In 1875 the gang to which Frank James belonged formed a plan to rob the Nashville bank. The plan, as given out, was to rob the Springfield bank, but shrewdness on the part of Captain Yates placed the game nearer home and the plan was abandoned. A gentleman in the city, to whom Frank James owed a gambling debt of \$60, has a letter stating that his (James') wife had got on to his sporting and would not let him have a dollar with which to gamble, but that he would see that his creditors got the money. Afterwards Woodson offered a gold watch in liquidation of the debt. Woodson and Howard are remembered by many other citizens of Nashville. Woodson was a frequent visitor of the court house officials, all of whom speak of him in the highest terms."

A few days before Frank James surrendered, but while he was contemplating surrender, Major Edwards wrote Ex-Gov. Charles P. Johnson the following letter:

"St. Joe, Oct. 31, 1882.

"MY DEAR CHARLEY:—If Frank James surrenders—and such a thing is quite probable—will you defend him? He has not a dollar in the world, but if you will help him in this, his hour of life and death, his friends will not forget you.

"JOHN N. EDWARDS.

"Send reply to Sedalia."

This letter was marked "private and confidential."

Ex-Gov. Johnson immediately wrote the following reply, and mailed it the same day:

"St. Louis, Nov. 4, 1882.

"FRIEND JOHN:—Yes, I will, to the best of my ability.

C. P. JOHNSON."

The day of the surrender, Mr. Johnson telegraphed Major Edwards to caution Frank to be discreet in talking to his visitors. He said that he expected to make the best defense for Frank James that lay in his power. He thought the outlaw's surrender was the best thing that could have happened to the State; that, in fact, it was a good thing all around—good for Frank, good for his family, good for Gov. Crittenden's administration, and good for the country at large.

On October 7 the governor issued the following proclamation annulling his proclamation of July 28, 1881, offering rewards for Frank James, Jesse James, and others, its object now being fully accomplished, and to prevent any claim which might hereafter be made for the arrest of parties who it might be claimed were implicated in any of the robberies and crimes mentioned in said proclamation:

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }  
CITY OF JEFFERSON. }

Whereas, on the 28th day of July, A. D. 1881, I, as Governor of the State of Missouri, did issue a proclamation offering certain rewards therein specified for the arrest and conviction of certain express and train robbers; now, by virtue of the power vested in me as governor aforesaid, I do hereby revoke and annul from and after this date said proclamation and declare the offer of said rewards to be no longer in force, or the reason that the principal actors in and perpetrators of the crimes therein mentioned are dead or are in the custody of the law of the State.

I congratulate the people of Missouri on the restoration of peace and the supremacy of the law over the entire State, the result of the efficiency of the various officers of the law who have contributed to this happy end.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the great seal of the State of Missouri.

Done at the city of Jefferson this 7th day of October, A. D. 1882.

THOS. T. CRITTENDEN.

By the governor.

MICHAEL K. McGRATH, Secretary of State.

Frank James at the Independence Jail was for many weeks the greatest attraction in the West. With excellent legal ability for his defense, with a host of friends, one member of the Supreme Court of Missouri already prejudged in his favor, and the governor astride the fence, one could safely bet the noted outlaw would come clear and be a second Alexander.

[THE END.]



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